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NUMBER ONE;

OR,

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

BY

FRANK FOSTER.

—
SECOND SERIES.
—

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & CO.,
STATIONERS' HALL COURT.

1863.

The Publishers have also ready a Royal Octavo Edition of the first volume of "NUMBER ONE," appended to which is a COLONIAL DIRECTORY for Sydney, Melbourne, and New Zealand.

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APOLOGY FOR A PREFACE.

Had there been anything more to say in *this* volume by the only person *immediately* concerned therein, it would have been said in the work itself by

THE AUTHOR.

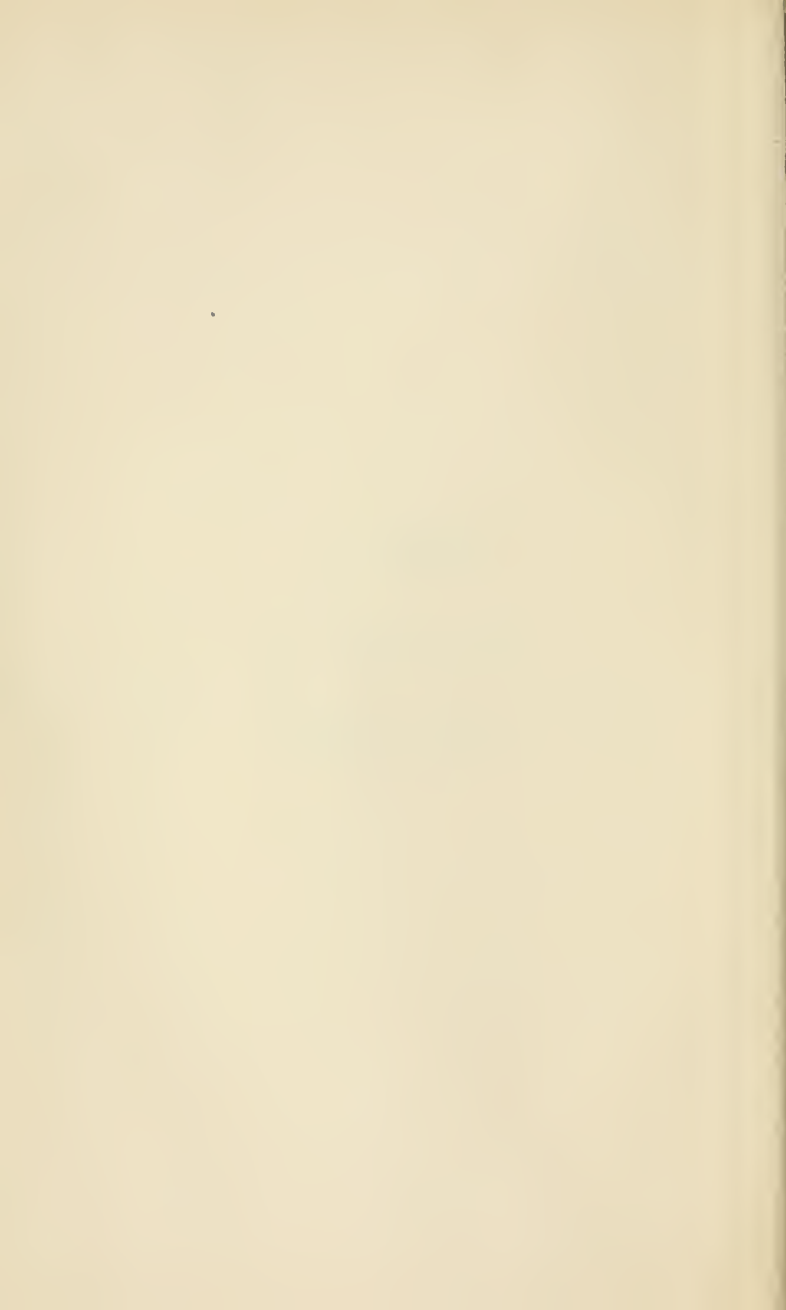
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Chapter i.

INTRODUCTORY.

ALIVE AGAIN.—REVIEWS AND
REVIEWERS.



GENTLE READER!—follow me for a few moments while I lead you to heaven. Though powerless as yourself, or the most humble or exalted being this side the grave, to pierce the mysteries of the eternal mansion, I may at least point to the home of spiritual nobility—in the same way that some other mortal guide would direct attention to princely palaces on earth, without himself being privileged either to see or let others see the interior, much less to ensure a reception therein.

Do not misconstrue the present invitation. I ask you to accompany me to heaven. But there are at least *two* heavens. If happiness is heaven, there is one such region *here* and another *hereafter*. Between present and future bliss there is, no doubt, a wonderful distinction—so wonderful, that in the pleasing prospect of the future the soul derives her chief joy in the present. Without attempting a comparison between what is incomparable—between mortal and immortal happiness—between the perishable sweets of time and the imperishable crystals of eternity—it is nevertheless possible, through the genial effect of the sun's rays, to foreshadow the glory of the parent power.

The last chapter of the first volume of the present work was closed with the following observation : —“ Should the author’s life be spared, this work will be continued.” Like some faint and tiny meteor, suspended as it were between time and eternity, my own little spirit—so far as related to its temporary dwelling place—was then in a very doubtful state. But as nothing mortal is immutable, the great Creator and Ruler of all things can alone tell how long each vital tenant of mortality may inhabit this, or when pass to another and more remote region.

“ How many friendly eyes are closed to time,
Whose kindred spirits thought to *follow* mine ? ”

“ Poor fellow ! he can’t live long.” Of such and similar words the oral prescriptions of some of my comforters were once composed. But “ nobody ”—said a celebrated Irishman—“ wishes to read his own epitaph till he is dead.” On the like presumption, it may be said that nobody wishes to hear neighbouring prophets announce the exact time for reading such epitaph. Many a friend in robust health, in bewailing the critical state of some poor invalid, has unconsciously sounded the key-note of his own early fate, in the gloomy prediction of “ he can’t live long.” I am myself a living witness of such an event, while one noble heart at least, by whom my funeral dirge was sadly and softly whispered, has long since ceased

to beat. Such has happened near home. Has it not happened, and may it not again happen, in or near the homes of tens of thousands in the world? Here was I, surrounded by weeping friends—or at least by those whose downcast eyes were being prepared for the sad office—friends who, for ought I know to the contrary, had already been dreaming of, if not talking to, that stony-hearted yet demure-looking bed and box maker, “our undertaker.” Acquaintances, too, who had prepared to drape their garments with various lengths and breadths of sorrow, according to the degree of friendship existing between themselves and a departing—*not departed*—spirit; acquaintances who had probably decided—after court custom—on the time, *the shortest time*, for displaying their sad symbols of woe, and *the earliest time* for exchanging the same for fans and feathers that would no longer remind the wearer of spirits *without*, but of things *within* the way of the world. Yet, contrary to the prophetic calculations of man, here I am, with myriads of brother mortals, still working and still content to work, till the end of the time allotted for each to live, to love and to labour on earth. With renewed physical, if not mental vigor, I am now, by God’s goodness, enabled to renew my acquaintance not only with personal and immediate friends, but also with a large circle of readers, to each and all of whom I extend the hand of true fellowship; for, in

my humble endeavour to sketch a few of the leading features of "NUMBER ONE," I shall regard all my subjects as friends—having no other feeling but that of good will towards every human being. But, in the words of Honest John, "There are the *number ones* which signify selfishness, and all that is bad; and there are the *number ones* that denote independence, charitableness, and all that is good." It is not because I may direct the attention of any particular friend to some tiny black or blacks on his head or his heart that I am myself conscious of not having had, or still having, something of the same kind on my own brow, or within my own breast. Therefore, let us talk over our foibles together, and, though our opinions may differ, let our hearts be by charity united.

Here, then, reader, you have the key to the heaven alluded to, namely—*to be in the world, and to be happy therein*. I trust you are already familiar with that indescribable peace of mind in the mortal habitation that constitutes the only claim to the symbolic title of a better heaven hereafter. As a Christian, you know and feel that this present life is but a probation for a better, and that if your condition be one of suffering in it, the patient sufferer will be compensated one hundred fold in another state. If you have no such knowledge and no such hope, you have no such prospect. You may try to

make your paradise in this world, but you will fail in the attempt. Some imaginary thing will be the basis of that paradise which you will never live to enjoy. Religious truth supplies the greatest happiness to be found on earth ; but if, in our worship of gold, we cast religious truth to the winds, terrible will be the consequences thereof.

Let no one from these remarks draw a false inference. Let no one suppose that in my estimate of gold I claim for the natural tendencies of my own heart a less worldly view than that taken by the majority of mankind ; that I have no desire for the acquisition of the precious metal, or that I am insensible to the noble uses to which it may be, and frequently is, applied. Any one who would profess a total disregard for this world's goods must be something more than mortal. I make no such pretension, but simply declare from experience that it is well where gold is not regarded as the *chief object* of life, as it cannot, of itself, lead its possessor even to that first and temporary paradise—heaven on earth.

Should the outraged feelings of any reader whose heart is fireproof on the subject of religion recoil at the opening remarks of the present volume, or should the hardened sense of the external case lead to the erroneous supposition that I am about to surfeit with sermons what no sermon can subdue, let the affrighted spirit suspend judgment and read on ! There is no-

thing in the world—pardon the warmth of the expression—so damnable as hypocrisy. A hypocrite is the prince of humbugs. God forbid that I should advance a single word on the subject of religion that does not reflect my own feelings. Yet shall I say less than I feel, or disguise the little I have to say? Should any man suppose that a regard for the soul as well as for the body would tend to make one an exclusive and solitary being, let him follow me in my wanderings through the world. If we cannot share each other's opinions, we will not shun each other's company. Did he find me a cheerful companion in my early days? Then let me assure him he will not find me a less cheerful friend *now*.

In the following strange yet truthful scenes in *the way of the world* it will be seen that "filthy lucre," as it is sometimes called, contains, in a greater or lesser degree, an irresistible charm for all, though, happily, the attraction is not sufficiently strong to make all alike fall down and worship it. It will also be seen that there are in the world *some* persons at least who consider religion to be compatible with business, and that both are found to work well together. It is not every member of the human family "who makes business his religion and money his God." Business *without* religion is like a dirty vesture on a dirty skin, or rather, like a dirty skin with no vesture at all. But business *with* religion is like

a clean vesture over a clean skin. The one may be subject to change, but the other—true religion—is not a garment to be put on one day in seven, and carefully laid aside for the remaining six days in the week. But before I launch the little bark that is once more to convey to my patrons a few of the incidents from the busy ocean of life, let me candidly yet courteously salute the little knot of critical observers whose literary functions ever ensure for them that gracious recognition due to the recorders of every new event. The critic blows a powerful bugle, but the public voice is still more powerful. And there are subjects on which some of our literary buglemen prefer silence to sound ; for, of my own knowledge, I can affirm that there are many distinguished gentlemen connected with the press who shudder at, or shrink from, anything in which they may perceive the least glimmer of religion—in the same way that certain creatures of the animal world turn aside and fly from daylight. Let me then say a few words, more particularly to my young readers, concerning

REVIEWS AND REVIEWERS.

Or “young authors and their works” would probably have been a more appropriate heading to the following remarks.

Founding my observations on the result of early personal experience, I may at once start with the

declaration that a young author is apt to over estimate the worth of a review, by placing an undue value on the judgment of a reviewer. Thus he creates for himself an unnecessary amount of anxiety, by anticipating or viewing the praise or censure of the critic with far more pleasure or pain than should be provoked by the smiles or frowns of any literary censor. Be it understood, however, that the present observations proceed from the pen of one who in his literary career has found a greater number of friends than foes, and whose outspoken sentiments are not fired by an undue partiality towards the one, nor by the slightest animosity towards the other. If an enemy—enemy ! This word is too often misapplied. That man only is an enemy who would disturb or destroy the happiness of another. A truly honest critic, however severe, should be regarded as a friend, while a dishonest one is simply an enemy to himself.

What is a review ?—the opinion of *one* man. Yet, as will presently be made manifest, it is sometimes stripped even of this solitary virtue ; for like those gems in a British crown, the place of which was once filled by worthless bits of paste, the honest opinions of a reviewer may be falsely represented by glaring counterfeits. Yet an *impartial* review must be regarded as something more than the opinion of *one* man. Like the recognised head or leader in any other walk of life, it takes a position as literary dictator of

its own immediate party—be that party large or small, important or otherwise. Without, therefore, presuming to question the value of *impartial* reviews, I simply state my opinion—to be supported by strong evidence—that such reviews form the exception not the rule at the present time—not only at the present time, but that such has been the case in times past, not only in times past, but that there is everything to justify the belief that such will continue to be the case in the future.

As a preface to some incontestable proofs in support of the present proposition, one or two brief sentences will perhaps open a light by which the main question may be more readily disposed of. It is only fair to assume that critics, as a body, are masters of their art, although—as in any other department of life—even among a class where great learning prevails, there may be a few bunglers who are in no way qualified for the exalted profession to which they belong. But critics, like other men are *mortal*. Yet, in their professional capacity they are tried—yes, the very infirmities of human nature are here submitted to tests from which every other profession is exempt. A critic is necessarily an author. Not only is he the author of essays on the works of others, but it not unfrequently happens that he is the author of a work or works—perhaps eminent ones—of his own. In such work or works certain subjects, whatever

they may be, are treated after a certain fashion. But suppose another writer—equally honest—should treat such matters after an opposite fashion? and suppose further, that the work of the latter should pass for review under the pen of the former! Would it be a natural thing for a parent to embrace the offspring of another, and at the same time condemn his own? Is Mr. Lever, the watchmaker, a likely man to extol the productions of Mr. Horizontal? The inventor of some new and meritorious gun would surely not send for a certificate on the merits of his invention to Sir William Armstrong? A recent occurrence in which a certain government clerk, under the authority of Her Majesty's Commissioners for the International Exhibition, managed for a short time to direct attention both to the merits of a pet companion in his own lodgings, and to the demerits of all artists who lodged elsewhere, will also partially illustrate the manner in which some private interest may impede or cripple the faithful discharge of a public duty. And are scientific subjects or commercial matters more likely to create feelings of antagonism on the part of their authors than would be provoked by literary emanations from other and opposite spirits? I think not.

There are innumerable little things that militate against the chance of obtaining from one pen an *impartial* review of the productions of another. It

does not necessarily follow even that a *favorable* review should be an impartial one. "Every man has his hobby," says a celebrated writer. If such be the case, critics, like other men, have *their* hobbies. Some may be partial to horse-racing, some to boat-racing; some may be liberal patrons—unless they are all teetotallers?—of alcohol or tobacco; some may indulge in Sunday excursions or Sunday dinner parties; some are naturally of one political creed, and some of another; while it may be assumed that all belong to some religious sect, though such sects be various both in faith and form. It is therefore obvious—according to the natural tendencies of the human heart—that critics would favor those writers by whom their particular hobbies, tastes, or doctrines are upheld, rather than those by whom they are opposed. Self-sacrifice is a heaven-born—therefore a *rare* virtue, at least, in *the way of the world*; and until it shall have been proved that superior literary attainments invariably draw the mind of the scholar heavenward, a learned critic must not be set down as the master either of a larger or smaller amount of charity than that possessed by any body else. If on any particular subject unity of feeling should happen to exist between the critic and his patient, the latter may be treated accordingly; but if, on the contrary, the literary doctor or highly schooled allopat should discover in the mind of his patient the least tendency either towards

homœopathy or any other conflicting dogmas, woe to the mental blemishes of the offender !

So much for a few of the obstacles that stand in the way of *impartial* reviews from critics, *number one*, of the *first* class. That class includes men of the highest learning and probity. But how can the Alisons of literature be expected to extol the Macaulays, or the Macaulays to laud the Alisons ? Nevertheless they are honest to their own convictions, and write what they really believe, although in some cases they may fail to make the public believe what they write. But there is a host of minor fry, who not only write contrary to their convictions, but who, in trying to “write down” others, generally write down themselves—as anything but wise or even honest men. During a long literary career, numerous cases of this kind have come under my notice—cases in which the productions of brother authors have been much more unfairly dealt with than the productions of my own pen. Out of a large number of such notices, two or three of recent date, and of immediate and personal application, will be sufficient to show the character both of the writers and writings alluded to. I would readily avoid *direct* allusion to any particular journal or journals, could I do so consistently with the foregoing statement. But assertions like the present should always be supported by proof ; and the following reviews will at once furnish

the necessary evidence. Appended to the present volume will be found a large number of reviews, printed in *extenso*, together with extracts from letters addressed to the author of "Number One" by more than fifty clergymen. Here then is the best answer to three *criers* on the opposition benches. Here is praise enough and more than enough to have satisfied even a vain man, or to have induced any one to pass, in *silence*, so small a number of opponents—two of which are of comparative insignificance. But as one of the journals of this *trio* arrogates to itself a proud and domineering position in the literary world, it becomes me, as a simple duty to the public, if not to myself, briefly to refer to writers who would fain guide and govern public opinion on the broad and expansive field of literature, but who cannot, forsooth, guide and govern themselves on the simple path of "consistency." "Number One" was published in the early part of April 1862; and the following *elaborate and elegant* review, from the *Athenæum* of 26th July, was delivered by the critic, after a *four months'* conception.

Number One ; or, the Way of the World. By

Frank Foster. (Simpkin & Marshall.)

UNDER this title, we find the autobiography of a hard-working, struggling, but not altogether successful man. "Frank Foster" is probably a feigned name, but the story is evidently the real history of "somebody's" life. At first there is a slight attempt at romance-writing,

and the commencement of the book is, doubtless, imaginative to a great degree ; but as the writer proceeds in his work, he becomes too much interested in his own adventures, or too much engrossed by his own misfortunes, to keep up the fictitious character of " Frank Foster," and he gives us a rather melancholy record of his own private history.

The author, like his hero, made his first start, it would seem, as a draper's apprentice. He was, no doubt, honest and industrious, and rose eventually to the rank of a " commercial gent." To travel about the country with a salary of 400*l.* a-year, an allowance of a guinea a-day for expenses, and an excellent "turn-out" in the way of a horse and chaise, was the very thing he had been longing for ; and if Frank could have been contented with his lot as a "traveller," it would, we suspect, have been a fortunate thing for him. But Mr. Foster had a taste for literary pursuits. Already he had written pamphlets and squibs, and paragraphs in the papers. He had even published a book, entitled 'Sketches of Commercial Life,' which had, as he assures us, "an *immense sale*," and made a great sensation in all the "commercial rooms" along the road. So, intoxicated by success, Frank Foster determines to be an author. But in a year or two he found out he had made a mistake ; for though he had thought "400*l.* a-year and his expenses hardly earned as a traveller," he now "worked harder and longer for less than half that sum." "I wrote," he says, "early and wrote late, wrote poetry and wrote prose, wrote for others and wrote for myself ; but it was some time before I wrote anything long enough or strong enough to produce me two hundred a-year." Fortunately, he seems to have had a never-failing admiration for his own writings, and a pleasing consciousness that they really were appreciated by the public, whether they sold or not. He took unbounded pains to please his readers ; and he always contrived, at the same time, to

please himself. But, having used up all his stock of anecdotes, and rather overdrawn the resources of his imagination, Mr. Foster determined to try "fresh fields and pastures new," and fancied that by a trip to the Gold Fields (then newly discovered) he could obtain fresh materials for a book, and perhaps "make a decided hit."—and, "without detracting from the dignity of an author," he also intended "to do a little in the way of trade." Accordingly, he started for Melbourne with a modest capital of 400*l.*; and he returned triumphantly with 2,000*l.*, and the desired materials for a book into the bargain. Not contented, however, to stop here, Mr. Foster, like many another speculator, must needs try once more to "make his fortune": so he returns to Australia with his 2,000*l.* laid out in articles of commerce—and loses it all! The book, however, was duly written (to say nothing of three dramas besides), and it became, he assures us, "the most successful of all his works: nearly 4,000 copies of it were sold, and it was reviewed by 66 newspapers, and one copy of it was graciously accepted by Her Majesty"! But the fortune realized by the author was still only a very small one. Hearing that the late Albert Smith was making large sums of money by his "Mont Blanc," Mr. Foster next determines to try the effect of "an entertainment." He made great preparations for a provincial tour, as well as for a season in London, and he incurred expenses of various kinds. The day arrived, "the weather was good—my spirits were good—the audience was good, and the entertainment was good"; but, at the moment of promised success, Mr. Foster broke down completely. With much bodily suffering, he managed to struggle through his "entertainment," and then fell into a malignant fever, which left behind it a "more lasting disease, from which he has never yet recovered, and will probably never recover at all."

Poor Mr. Foster!—whoever he may be, he must at least command our sympathy and respect. As a writer, he does not seem to possess any genius, judging from the copious extracts he gives us from his numerous published works, successful and unsuccessful. He had better have stuck to his own trade, and have insured his comfortable little income as a commercial traveller. But, notwithstanding his evident lack of talent and originality—his very commonplace remarks, his numerous platitudes, and his little lectures on morality,—there is something inexpressibly touching in his confidence in the good-nature of “the public.” He pours out, as if to an indulgent friend, his thoughts, his experiences, his failures. He picks out his favourite passages, and reproduces them, in the firm reliance that “the public” will be really pleased to see them again in another form. He shows us every little note he has ever received, whether from Mr. ——— (the successful merchant-prince, in his own old way of business), or from Mr. Gladstone, or from General Grey. He even gives us many anonymous letters, which have been to him a great source of interest and amusement. He expects our condolences on the death of his wife, and our congratulations that, for the last twelve months, “his position as amanuensis or secretary to ——— has placed him in personal contact and communication with the most distinguished personages in the United Kingdom, from the highest downwards”: and he promises, in a note at the end of the book, that “should his life be spared, this work will be continued.”

Good, simple-hearted Mr. Foster!—who has borne his sufferings and misfortunes with so much cheerful resignation, and who still preserves such an unbounded faith in himself and “the public,”—we sincerely hope that the world may continue to prove as good-natured as he believes it to be, in spite of all his failures, and that he will find friends ready and willing to purchase any number of his books for many years to come.

"Want of talent" would here appear to be the chief crime of "poor Frank Foster." What can be said in answer to this?—nothing. Foolish, or vain indeed, must be that man who would attempt—except by his works—to disprove such an accusation.

Assuming that the reader is not himself wholly devoid of "talent," but that he has at least the ability to *read* this learned critic without the aid of an eye glass, it will be unnecessary to waste more than a few words on the journalist, before I make him contradict himself. In a bygone age there was a poor man who, on account of his religious opinions, was persecuted and at the same time pitied by a notorious infidel. A sympathiser asked him "whether the strictures of his relentless persecutor did not occasion him severe pain?"

"No," was the reply; "it is not the horn but the *pity* of the beast that pains me."

Instead of attempting to hide his *real* opinion under a mask of dissimulation, had the reviewer of "Number One," in a manly and straightforward way, said, "Frank Foster, your religion is all humbug," the sincerity of the man would have insured respect, although I could not have pleaded "guilty" to his accusation. But as he is mean enough to insinuate what he has not the honesty to assert, I will merely ask the reader whether he would not be surprised to find that the author of "Number One"—a writer

without a particle of "talent"—has nevertheless written a "valuable work?" And will not the reader be still more surprised to learn that such is the declaration of that very *Athenæum* which now, in words that cannot be misconstrued, declares the author of that "valuable work" to be "a fool?" The following extract, from a long and favorable review by the *Athenæum*, refers to a former work by the author of "Number One," and published under the *incognito* of ——. If I give the title, my kind-hearted critic may accuse me of "puffing the productions of my own pen," although I have no further pecuniary interest in the work alluded to—having disposed of the copyright some time ago.

"This is a conscientiously written book—an excellent guide to the Australian settlements. The statistics which it contains are brought down to the latest date. The author's advice, as given in our quotation, will be valuable in the city, where, indeed, his book will probably find an extensive class of purchasers; for its directions must be indispensable to people who have interests in our great southern empire, and to emigrants who are hesitating on the choice of a new home."

The reader would, no doubt, like to know something concerning those literary *savans* whose pens, like the fingers of a magician, can thus change human beings into "wits" or "fools" at their own ease and pleasure. Had not the present work originated with

a higher motive than that of dealing in personalities, I might have gratified the reader's curiosity to the full. Many members of the "Hervey" school are already gone to their *final* resting place. To any and every existing class I will merely convey my best and sincere wishes both for their present and future welfare. But should I, in some future chapter or volume, deem it my duty, or feel disposed, to wander into the rich field of "literary poppies," I have abundant materials for raising—if I can only find the "talent" to raise—a prettier crop of "curiosities" than was ever yet drawn by the "poor, simple-hearted Frank Foster."

It was my intention to have passed without remark, the farcical style and character of the *notice* of "Number One," as taken from the *Athenæum*, inasmuch as it is not a *review*—unless a notice of the number of dishes on a dinner-table is to taken as a review of the meal itself. But, in order to prevent surprise or sorrow on the part of friends into whose hands this volume may fall, it is necessary to correct a conclusion to which a kind-hearted critic has arrived. In his eagerness to serve a friend to the best of his ability he has thought proper not only to kill "poor Mrs. Foster" but also to assure his readers that the husband of the departed one expects the condolence even of the lady-killer. Though in the allusion to a "domestic affliction" that is made in a former volume,

no name whatever is mentioned by the author of "Number One," the reviewer has selected *his own* victim, and made that victim the author's wife. I have therefore simply to inform those friends who may light on the only "death blow" of the critic, that the lady is still alive, and that—like Cato—sitting with book in hand and the (newspaper) weapon before her, she "smiles at the drawn dagger and defies its point," (if it has any)—knowing, as she does know, there is not the least danger to be apprehended from so harmless a tool.

Finally, let me refer to a "talent" with which the reviewer of "Number One" does not appear to be on the best terms. Founding my observation on *entirely different ground* to that whereon a worldly-wise critic takes his stand, I am justified in saying that as talents of some sort or other have been, in a lesser or greater degree, given to *every* man, the "simple-hearted Frank Foster" must, as a natural consequence, be a small shareholder—though his share may be as a mite to a mountain, when compared with that held by any other human being. And, praised be the Almighty, by whose grace alone I am now, in all humbleness of heart, enabled to declare that, while truly thankful for whatever little, either of talent or anything else, I may possess, I am *in no way vain of it*. Believe me therefore, gentle reader—and believe for yourself also—though ten thousand critics should

conspire to strip one of his little birth-right, the Great Giver Himself will protect each tiny gift—so long as the recipient does not abuse, but simply endeavours honestly to use it.

Here is another short notice—a notice taken from the *Morning Herald*, 10th April, 1862.

Number One; or, the Way of the World. By Frank Foster (pp. 460, Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., 1862), purports to be an autobiography by a gentleman who announces that he has given to the world no fewer than fifteen volumes, but who has not yet learnt to write. He has a good intention in his work but the execution is most indifferent. He would fain warn young men to be just before they are generous, and to take care of number one. But his book is written in such a style that no young man would willingly linger over its dreary pages. When he tries to be anecdotal he is simply tiresome, when he is descriptive he is very dry. We cannot, in justice to our readers or to ourselves, praise the book, which less pretentious might have passed muster. Canting commonplaces do not attract very many young men, and we should be afraid, if we recommended this book, that our stamp upon its artificial morality would do much more harm than we would care to have upon our shoulders.

In a very eulogistic notice of my former works, the same journal is pleased to declare the man who “has not yet learnt to write” to be “one of the most graceful and spirited writers of the day—a writer who never allows the interest of his readers to flag for a moment.” While my former productions are “all that can be desired,” the present work is so dull,

that "no young man would willingly linger over its dreary pages." How magical and cameleon-like the change! Yet there has been no change in the style of the author, who is now saluted by the kisses, and now by the kicks of the critic. In spirit, as in letter, Mr. — is still Mr. —, although under the *nom de plume* of "Frank Foster" he is unknown to that reviewer who suddenly discovers that "one of the most graceful and spirited writers of the day" can't write at all; not only that he can't write, but that in his futile attempt at composition the novice has added to the gravity of his offence, by clothing himself in "artificial morality."

This last thrust from the steel (pen) of the critic is "the unkindest cut of all." What?—"artificial morality?" The very name of such a cloak is enough to startle one! Anything artificial in preference to that! Artificial teeth, a leg or an arm—or both legs, arms and teeth may be useful things in supplying the wants of poor suffering, decaying, or crippled humanity. Even an artificial head of hair may sometimes be found desirable, as an ornament on a barren crown; but "artificial morality" is nothing more nor less than a vesture direct from Satan's wardrobe. It is something that almost defies description—a veil of various shapes and colors, a veil by which unfathomable depths of vice are covered by the glassy surface or placid calm of external virtue;

it is a garb that conveys a hopeful prayer to an impenitent sinner, while the comforter guides the hand that is to sign a codicil in favor of the dictator. "Artificial morality!" It is the voice of a plausible old hypocrite, who says family prayers for the protection of his own darlings, while his heart is devising means to invade the sanctity of some unprotected virgin; it is, in fine, nothing less than a highly glazed paper dickey over a breast all dark and polluted within! If this indeed be my last and newest habit, I will earnestly pray that the Great Reviewer of mankind may quickly divest me of so vile and so hateful a garment—even though, when divested, its late wearer should be left to "wander naked through the world." One can scarcely curb a natural inclination for the indulgence of a humorous and sarcastic vein on the journalist who, like a peevish child, would rather bite his thumb or burn his own fingers than have nothing to cry about. But pardon rather than powder is the best return, if not the best remedy, for such opposite fits of good and ill humour on the part of critics who forget that there is a certain amount of respect due to their calling, if not to themselves.

Another little specimen of *honest* criticism must suffice—it being the last of my three opponents. Here is an extract from the *Derby Mercury*, 28th April, 1862:—

“What a waste of money to print this book ! It contains 460 well printed pages, on capital paper, and is handsomely bound, yet it possesses no other virtue whatever. The book is unquestionably honest, but it is dull.”

In the foregoing elegant notice it will be seen that the writer does not consider honesty to be a virtue, as he says that, beyond the printing and binding, the work has “no virtue whatever,” while in the following line he declares that “the book is unquestionably honest.” There was a time in my literary career when such silly notices would have caused me some annoyance. The only pain at present occasioned by their perusal is that produced by a melancholy feeling of sorrow for any poor scribbler who, in a little bit of black and disfigured type, can thus convey to the public so sad a portrait of “Number One.”

In summing up the whole matter for the benefit of any of my young readers who may happen at the same time to be authors, I have simply to declare, as the result of my own experience, that adverse criticisms will neither prevent the sale nor the ultimate public approval of a book—*provided there be anything in the work in which the public feel interested*; while, on the contrary, favorable reviews from each and all of the reviewers in the kingdom—though they may cause a temporary demand for the work reviewed—will fail to make any book—even one of intrinsic merit—permanently successful, *if there be nothing in*

it which the general public desire to read. Critics may possibly take offence at these observations. I can't help that. This book is not written for critics, unless critics may happen to benefit therefrom. I should for ever despise myself if, with the unholy hope of securing the favor of *any* body of men, I were to conceal my real opinions under the flimsy tinsel of flattery or falsehood. While I value the good opinion of any man, rich or poor, I would rather have the unbribed love of the humblest being in creation than smiles, won by deceit, from the greatest monarch that ever swayed a sceptre. For success in life, I trust, as I have ever trusted, to *number one*—that is, to myself; while I place my entire trust for all, and above all, in God, not in man. If my mind be weak, to which of the two—the mighty here, or the Almighty both here and hereafter—can I safely look for strength? If my words be feeble, which of the two can make them strong? I leave others to answer these questions. I have now done with the critics, though it would be contrary to truth if I were to say, “I hope the critics have done with me.”

One word to the public. There is an old proverb that says “One man may lead a horse to water, but twenty cannot *make* him drink.” Is this not applicable to the human race? I never yet found a man who liked to be crammed—unless indeed it might be to have his body crammed with dainties or

his pockets with gold. Policy, therefore, if not principle, might prevent one from attempting to cram others, either with any particular political, commercial, or religious creed. Though I may entertain certain wishes with regard to certain friends, yet if I fail to realize those wishes by reason I can scarcely hope to do so by force. Without attempting to cram any body, let me include all alike, both great and small, rich and poor, in the wish I previously expressed concerning myself. Let me simply reiterate the fervent hope, that if any reader of this work, or any reader or writer of other works, should at this moment be clothed in "artificial morality," he may soon feel a desire to change, and soon experience the inexpressible pleasure that cannot fail to be derived from having changed, the counterfeit for the *real* article.

The prologue is ended. Let the curtain rise, the play begin, and critics smile or frown on what may appear therein.

Chapter ii.

A MODERN INVENTOR.—CHARACTER OF
MODERN INVENTIONS.—A HARBOUR
FOR INVENTIONS, AND A WORKHOUSE
FOR INVENTORS.



WHO'D BE AN INVENTOR? If the reader is not himself an inventor, he may possibly, after the perusal of some of the following pages, be better qualified to answer the foregoing question. In the first volume of this work, the question of "Who'd be an author?" was both asked and answered. In that enquiry it will be found that it is quite possible for a gentleman to be satisfied with the profession of which he is a member—even though the duties of such calling be arduous and solitary, and the rewards small and uncertain. But as "a contented mind is a continual feast," I may venture to record my humble testimony in support of the proverb; for, in the early stages of my own literary career, the feast alluded to was frequently the only one with which a hopeful spirit had to be comforted.

Well. It is no longer the trials and troubles, the hopes and disappointments, the successes and failures, the pleasures and pains, or the losses and gains of an author to which the attention of the reader is invited, but to the equally variable career, and still more sanguine and inflammable spirit of an inventor.

O, for "the pen of a ready writer" to take a faithful portrait of an inventor!—a pen with which to

picture one of the most wonderful children, if not the most gifted child of nature,—a being designed by heaven to display, in the extended capacity of his intellect, the vast resources of the human mind, and the absolute littleness of its greatest achievements, compared with the majesty and power of the great Creator of all. How shall I describe this great human phenomenon—an inventor? How depict this mysterious and almost supernatural agent—an agent permitted—while the great apple of time ripens—to draw from the secret recesses of the mind new matter for the extension of civilization, wealth, and power, and for the development, on the globe's surface, of the daily and progressive wonders of the world!

Taking the events of the present little drama in the chronological order of their original development, I may preface the exposition with the candid avowal that the story will not flag for want either of strange scenes or equally strange characters. Should the action be allowed for one moment to hang fire, the fault thereof must not be attributed to the materials of the drama, but simply to the want of “talent” or mental fire for their application on the part of the dramatist. Three years ago I had not even entered the alphabet of the subject now in hand. I knew nothing, not even by surmise, of those complex forms and figures that have since furnished abundant matter

for the curious revelations about to be disclosed. What a store of knowledge—both of good and evil—may be acquired in *the way of the world* during the brief space of three years! That time has qualified the present student to take a position as one among the first six wranglers at—not at Cambridge, but—never mind where. Such knowledge is possibly closed to two-thirds of the number who may read, but have not yet read, the present pages. They probably know nothing of the *internal* working of that machine which will presently be set in motion. Yet, after seeing a little, they may have seen enough,—here lies the charm!—to quench any desire for personal participation either in the action or in the peculiar art of some of the actors, however much they may wish for information on the subject.

* * * * *

“ When pain’s
The only fruit the tree of knowledge bears,
Who but the fool would reach his hand to pluck? ”

It is said that “one half the world doesn’t know how the other half lives.” I verily believe there is not a man in the world that knows exactly how six of his neighbours live. He knows, or believes, them to be “very respectable people”—that’s all. Is not *that* enough? Quite enough, concerning the domestic region, but not so with regard to the broad and expansive ocean of life. Here, every mariner—if he

does his duty—will take his pen for the benefit of others, and carefully note the discovery of any shoals or shallows that have not been previously recorded on his chart. But, returning to the previous enquiry of “who’d be an inventor?” let me—before the reader is startled with the various shades and shadows, or the alternate hopes and fears with which this momentous question is involved—introduce a rough key, or trio of keys, which may also serve as guides to the chief wards of a strange and truthful, if not exciting story. Take key number one, which will at least lead to a distant, if only imperfect, view of

A MODERN INVENTOR.

A human phenomenon—seemingly mad, but not half so mad as he seems ; or, if mad at all, mad only on the subject in which he is engaged. Just follow him from sunrise to sunset. The morning dawns and opens at the same moment a new light on some unfinished design of our hero. Whop ! he is already out of bed. Bang ! he has left his room and slammed the door. His prayer—if he says any—is a short one, as five minutes only intervene between his hasty evacuation of bed, and his equally hasty entrance into his little workshop or private study. Two hours are numbered with the past. Clock strikes *eight*. “Breakfast, sir !” says Brush. “Coming !” is the reply. Clock strikes *nine*. “Breakfast is getting

cold, sir!" says Brush. "Coming!" is the reply. Clock strikes *ten*. "Breakfast is quite cold, sir!" says Brush. "Ready!" is the reply—a reply immediately followed by the speaker, who now takes his seat at table, and nearly smothers everything thereon with dirty drawings, dirty things without a name, and dirty fingers. "Very good!" exclaims the mechanical genius, as he examines some unsightly model, and at the same time pours on the table-cloth the coffee he intended for his cup. "Capital!" he continues, upsetting the milk he intended for his coffee. Yet he instinctively gets a bit and a drop of the remains at intervals, without having the most remote idea of what he is either eating or drinking, or whether, in fact, he is eating or drinking at all. Breakfast over, he sallies forth towards Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens—ostensibly for the purpose of improving his health, but in reality with the hope that a change of air may improve or perfect his ideas. There he goes, in the direction both of the Serpentine and Knightsbridge barracks. He is surely not going to drown himself? No; an inventor has a mind above anything of that sort. He is perhaps about to enlist for a soldier? No; he may invent arms for others, but he has no wish to shoulder them himself. Then where is he going—to take a seat? No; he is going to post a letter—so he said before leaving home—yet he has been walking to and fro,

in odd boots, with the peak of his cap at the back of his head, for more than three hours, and in any direction but that of a post office. At evening twilight our hero re-enters his apartments. "What will you take with your tea, sir?" says Brush. "Let me see—what did I have for dinner to day?" "You didn't dine at home, sir," says Brush. "No; I've been to post—just post this letter, girl, as it is of the utmost importance, and—" "If you please, sir, you are wearing both pair of boots," says Brush. "Nonsense, girl; how could I wear—" "A thick and a thin one you see, sir." "Yes; it was in the dark this morning when I —— I'll take tea and something to eat at once, as I want a clear table to chalk out—has any one called to-day, girl?" "Only the butcher, sir, who says he can't send no more steak till he sees the tin for the last." "Post the letter, and then bring me my—my slippers."

To any person who has never known a *real* inventor, the likeness, of course, will not be familiar. Let me now turn from the master-mind to his subjects, and say a few words on the

CHARACTER OF MODERN INVENTIONS.

Inventions, like inventors—if number, variety, figure and form, instead of *merit*, had to be considered—might require an index almost as mountainous as the monster catalogue at the British Museum,

which will never be finished till the end of the world. Whereas the whole world of inventions may be classed under either two of the following heads,—“new” and “old;” or “good” and “good for nothing.” Concerning the first heading of “new and old” I will merely observe that many of the things termed “new inventions” are not new at all, and ought at once to be removed from the false position assigned to them. It would not require a very deep nor a very lengthened research on the part of national jurymen to prove that the slightest conceivable alteration in some existing model has often been deemed sufficient by the adaptor—not inventor—to introduce an old subject to the public as *entirely new*. These changes are sometimes not only of the most trifling kind, but they often possess no value whatever as an addition to the article on which the change has been effected. They may be symbolized by any person suspending a pretty tassel to the handle of an umbrella, and then declaring the umbrella to be his own invention. In the adaptation of an article, however, the transformation may be so complete, as to merit for the design the title of “a new invention.” Take, for instance, the circular saw. Other saws were in use for hundreds of years before either steam power or the circular saw were dreamt of. Yet the merits of the circular saw are so superior to those of its crude ancestor, that nobody would withhold from

the adaptor the title of an original inventor. Such conversions or adaptations are very different to those slight deviations which are often made in the form or action of some existing model, without improving either the one or the other. An inventor has frequently been deprived of more than half his just dues by those who have subverted the result of his labours to their own selfish purposes—by those who have made some *seeming* change, by which they have just avoided the infringement of the law, while they retain the chief merits of the article adopted. Are not such persons morally, if not legally, responsible for fraud? Such a piratical act of adoption is like putting one's hat over another's brains, and directing public attention to any bud of genius that may bloom beneath as the mental offspring of one's own fancy. And let me, in a passing observation, remark that this illegitimate trading in other people's goods is not confined solely to the *scientific* products of the mind. In a greater or lesser degree it may be discovered in every department of life. There may be found, in all professions and in all lands, a number of modern jobbers, who are either not qualified or not inclined to shape in the regions of fancy, and to launch on the world models of anything constructed *entirely* after *their own* ideas—jobbers who, like wandering Israelites, continue to gather, garnish, barter, or sell all they can lay hands on rather than labor for

the original productions of their own wares. In nothing, perhaps, is wholesale piracy so extensively carried on as in literature—that is, in second or third class works of fiction. In one-third of the novels issued by the English press the characters and incidents are, possibly, original drawings direct from fertile fields and gardens of the imagination belonging to the respective author-owners. But what of the remaining two-thirds? They form a monster hotch-potch or medley of French, German, Italian, and a very small portion of English ingredients, plucked from anything or from anybody's nursery, and appropriated by the purloiners without the slightest compunction or remorse. It is from such a mixture that large numbers of good natured and easily satisfied Englishmen are *periodically* supplied with what is termed “wholesome mental food for an enlightened people!” It would be more correctly designated as “slow poison for the moral character of man.” I speak not of harmless tales of fiction of an intellectual character, which, compared with standard works, may serve as a light repast to a substantial meal. I simply refer to those immoral productions of the devil's creation, that have nothing but a hellish tendency.

Referring to the opposite titles of “good” and “good for nothing,” under which modern inventions are here placed, it may be observed that the first word in the heading—the queen of words in the

English language—has, unfortunately, a much smaller number of subjects when reigning *alone*, than when allied to a couple of companions that deprive her of all might, majesty and beauty. “Good” and “good for nothing” are indeed terms that apply with equal force both to the animate and inanimate things of creation. No sooner does a good boy, girl, man, woman, or child ally himself or herself to bad companions, than all former goodness goes for nothing. With regard to modern inventions, the most competent authorities on the subject have recently declared that for every invention that may be pronounced “good” there are at least ten that are “good for nothing,” or, in other words, that “the introduction to the world of one invention of practical utility is usually followed by ten or a dozen of no practical utility whatever.” By this rule, a division in the world of inventions of what is useful from what is useless would give the following result—Articles of value, 1,400; articles of no value, 12,600. Total, 14,000. This total represents the number of patented articles for the United Kingdom at present extant. The reader—if a novice in this department of science—may be startled at these figures; but his doubt would at once be set at rest by a personal knowledge of the various frivolous trifles for which patents are continually applied for and granted. Scarcely a week passes without some sanguine spirit—poor victim of

self-delusion!—running or riding with all speed to a well known office, in order to secure a patent for something that is destined—through its parent's inflated imagination—either to revolutionize a particular branch of native industry, or to change the order of the whole creation by turning the world upside down. The man by whom this wonder is to be accomplished *believes* himself to be “a genius.” Poor fellow! Before the spell is broken he is calmly indulging a hope by day, and sweetly reposing on a belief by night, that the world will soon proclaim him what he declares himself to be—“one of the greatest inventors of modern times.” This self-indulgence—the only enjoyment or return for misapplied talent—is like that of the village schoolmaster, who, having drawn certain of his ancestors in black and red paint, announces himself a master both of fine arts and figures, and ready to give lessons in either or both. But the secret and silent hope, and the pleasure and pleasing anticipations of our *would-be* scientific genius, while the conception of his fancy is *in embryo*, form a sum total of enjoyment which is in no way shared by the master of facts and figures. It is not till the child of science “that was destined to turn the world upside down” is born and christened—not till it has been declared an abortion, and the fact made *patent* to the world, that its parent becomes aware that his late pleasing abstraction was

altogether a dream—save and except in the evaporation of time and money, on which subjects the dreamer awakes to a painful reality. Thus inventors of the sky-rocket class are ever and anon compelled to witness the sudden downfall of the sticks on which their pretty fancies explode, and thereby discover that nobody is surprised at the barren result of their labors—*except the laborers themselves.*

But there are little things and there are great things, there are little men and there are great men in every profession—especially in that mysterious and extensive profession that has not yet received a “local habitation and a name” in any of our directories. First class inventors are among the most noble and most wonderful of God’s children. Yet it often happens that highly gifted members of the human family—those whom the great Creator of creators has sent into the world as living instruments by which nations are enlightened and advanced—have to endure hardships, trials, troubles, and even persecutions at the hands of their less gifted brother mortals. As it is by no means an unusual thing for a mighty or master mind to be made the victim of one who is a master only of knavery, let me, as the last key to the succeeding story, briefly refer to a few of the hardships which great inventors have to endure, and to the fate that too often awaits them. A flatterer may tell a friend of his faults and remain

silent on his follies. I am no flatterer. In any future reference either to country or kin the reader may be sure of the undisguised opinions of the writer, however erroneous such opinions may be. And, apart from any national prejudice, I speak as one with some little authority, having been a great traveller, and having in my travels, journeyed twice round the world. Let me then say a few words on

A HARBOUR FOR INVENTIONS, AND A WORKHOUSE FOR
INVENTORS.

“England, with all thy faults, I love thee still.” England is the most favored nation in the world. As an Englishman, I may be pardoned—at least by my own countrymen—for such a note of admiration! But the reader will observe, in the preceding quotation, that the poet has qualified his love, inasmuch as the thing loved is not considered faultless. Let a more humble pen than that of a poet—like a child that turns a loving eye to a fond mother—point to thy greatness, O, Albion! before it proceeds to darken the page with human bluebottles that detract from thy native worth, and taint thy matchless beauty. But why point at all to those sterling and stereotyped English features that are as well known and as highly honored as English bank-notes? No, my fair fatherland; with one exception, I will pass thy far-famed graces, thy golden treasures, and thy other good

qualities, and turn at once to some little blemishes, to which many, even among thy own children, may be strangers. Though the very waters that surround and guard thee—like richly studded valleys of watchful sentinels—are charged with living emblems of thy boundless store, they at the same time reflect shoals and shallows on which gifted minds both from thy own and distant shores not only foul or founder, but are, ever and anon, plundered of their freighted treasures by beings who are a disgrace both to their country and their kin.

In no part of the world is fish so abundant and at the same time so good as in the waters that surround the British coast, and in the rich streams and rivulets that flow therefrom or contribute thereto. In tropical or semi-tropical climates this famous article of food is poor, dry, and devoid of flavor, and—to an English palate—almost worthless. But if there is no *good* fish, there are countless inhabitants of the deep that are *good for nothing*—at least not good for animal food. There are myriads of sharks. In their natural element and in their daily vocation these monsters are most accomplished artists, and their art lies in the pursuit and destruction—for their own special benefit—of better game. Every creature has the use for which it was designed, otherwise it would cease to exist. Man is the only creature that plans for himself vocations for which he was *not* designed—yet he

is permitted to live. Does not the comparison I am about to institute begin to dawn on the reader's imagination? The shark is not a permanent inhabitant, nor even a frequent visitor of English waters. The choice and dainty fish that abound therein would no doubt suit his palate to a nicety, if the temperature of the region only suited his constitution. But the insatiable glutton has not yet been either climatized or naturalized, and England is so far favored in her ocean preserves. Is she equally free from poachers on shore? Everybody has heard of land-sharks. For the sake of the nation at large, it is to be hoped that a great majority of the people have no nearer relationship with these human wolves than is possessed in the simple report of their existence on British soil. For aught I know to the contrary, there may be sharks in almost every profession. Fortunate, then, is that profession, and happy the members thereof, that have never been pursued or worried by the vipers. But unpleasant is the duty that compels me—from personal knowledge—to name a profession, and to refer to certain members thereof, that can lay no claim to the happy exemption.

The inventive mind of America, like the vast continent over which it soars, is a great and expansive one. In America, inventors form a little nation of themselves. Here is a school filled by Providence with her most favored children—children whose

studies go far to supply the mechanical requirements of their own country, while they contribute largely to the wants of other lands. But if Providence favors these scientific students in their studies, it often happens that, in their subsequent career, they are not themselves so highly favored by fortune. England is a harbour for good inventions, and a workhouse for the majority of good inventors. A large number of the best inventors and inventions of the present day come from America. The inventions reach here for the benefit of the land, and the inventors for the benefit of land-sharks. Land-sharks of various kinds abound in London. But none are so ravenous, so bloodthirsty, and so thoroughly heartless as the "select few" that swallow inventors whole, and fatten on their food. They regard the pretty things as an alderman regards whitebait—one of the most dainty dishes of the season. These sharks—if old practitioners, and skilful in their profession—are as keen and as watchful as eagles, and not unlike them in their palate, as the head and brains of a victim invariably supply the human vultures with their sweetest mouthful. It would, at first sight, appear that the Almighty had permitted the most highly gifted of his creatures to be hunted to death by beings whom Satan has drafted into his army for this special service. The bloodhounds who enlist in this diabolical design are animals in every sense but

one—*they have eternal souls*. Alas, if they only knew the worth of that possession! This they may discover and ponder before their earthly course is ended. Were they only like so many beasts that have no future, it would be well for the rest of the world, if their master, the evil one, had instant leave to drive the whole tribe of land sharks—like a second herd of swine—into the midst of the sea. Their remains would no doubt prove a repast as welcome to their ocean namesakes as does the gold of a miser or millionaire to craving relatives, who pray not for the rich man's soul, but for the rich man's decease.

It will be a relief to the writer, if not to the reader, to turn for a few moments to another subject—one of a more pleasing character. Between social, musical, or other performances, a little relaxation usually proves a refreshing breath-powder both for performer and spectator. Is there any good reason why a literary performance should not be thus refreshed or diversified? In the absence of such reason, let me, before I dive into the world of inventors and inventions, with which I have recently become familiar, present to my patrons a few pages of humble, though, I trust, wholesome fare, from a region a little nearer home.

But, in the present scientific age, the functions of literary draughtsmen may soon be dispensed with altogether. In the present day everybody has got

everybody's likeness. Shop windows, scrap books, and even letters are filled with all sorts of portraits, from the rude ploughman and his rosy lassie to the polished princee and his stately partner. It only remains for the modern photographer to invent some process by which he can draw the *character* as well as the external features of his subject. So soon as he shall have accomplished this—then farewell to the occupation of poor literary scribblers. Till then, we may, I presume, jog on in the old fashioned way.

Chapter iii.

BARON WALBROOK—AN UNFORTUNATE
UNION.—BEAUTY—A FORTUNATE UNION.

BEAUTY. I love beauty. Beauty is a little—stop! That good old English injunction that tells one “never to reveal a family secret” has suddenly crossed the mind and made me pause for a moment’s reflection. Well. The pause has led me to this conclusion—the revelation of a secret can only be justified on public grounds. Should the present partial disclosure be less than the reader might desire, let the reader, at the close of the story, consider whether the author would have been justified in saying more.

There is a certain something of some sort or other that is strange or mysterious in almost every family. Where is the circle, high or low, rich or poor, that has not a little feature peculiar to itself? The thing may be grave or gay, sunny or cloudy, heavenly or otherwise; but whatever its form, complexion, or degree, there is some little custom, creature, or care of a distinctive character, under every roof. Who is there of experience, and with extensive connexions in the world, that has not seen, both in his own and other circles, individuals and habits as strange and as opposite to each other as are the sun’s rays to the gloomy shades of night? In one family there is a domestic riddle that would puzzle any stranger to

solve ; in another dwelling there is a social weather-glass that tells its own story about the habits of the inmates without the aid of an interpreter. Take two or three

FAMILY PORTRAITS.

Poor Bone ! If it be true that this mortal life is made up partly of pleasure and partly of pain, the world itself does not contain more simple, yet faithful, types of human nature than are to be found in John Bone, Prudence, his wife, and their two sons. Mr. and Mrs. Bone were united at a very early age. At this stage of their career they were "truly happy !" They said so themselves ; and their numerous friends and acquaintances—of which I happened to be one—each and all echoed the joyful declaration. Two sons, William and Henry, in due time made their appearance. Happiness continued. Mr. and Mrs. Bone had two little boys—not buds of equal beauty, but, nevertheless, shoots from the same stem, and therefore of equal value to the parent heart. As such William and Henry were regarded by their father and mother.

From infancy to boyhood all was fair,
Or if some little cloud did intervene,
Hope drew the future by the sunny share,
And pictured happiness by what had been.

So soon, however, as time began to develop the youthful features of the young Bones, and "swaddling clouts" had been exchanged for little frocks and frills, and little frocks and frills doffed for little breeches and braces, William and Henry Bone began to prove that they were brothers only in kin—that in habit, taste, and disposition their features were altogether dissimilar. At a very early period William, the eldest boy, was declared to be "anything but bright." Even in his school-boy days, the only promise he gave of future distinction was that of being a "dunce." Yet nobody ever accused William of being a mischievous or "bad boy." Stupidity was at present the greatest fault laid to his charge. But Mr. Bone was a man of the world, and viewed "talent"—next to gold—as the brightest feature therein. The stupidity of his son, William, was therefore regarded as something more than a natural failing: It was a positive crime—*striking* evidence of which was frequently found on the back of the poor little criminal. His father called him "a fool," and a mother's protection was not strong enough to guard or rescue him from the penalty of his folly. Had William been the only son, his "stupidity" might have passed unpunished, if not unnoticed. But his brother, Henry, or Harry, as he was commonly called, was a "clever boy,"—the family "pet." Harry was clever at anything. He could apply his ability with equal force, either to

vulgar fractions, or to the more vulgar part of abusing his mother or kicking the servant's shins. But as Mr. Bone attributed everything to the "talent" or "wonderful spirit" of the lad, Harry had no bad marks, either on his book or on his back.

Time passed. A trade was selected for the stupid son, while the "clever boy" was allowed to make *his own* choice of a profession. Seven years more are numbered with the past. But let me leave the past, and briefly refer and close with the present. Mr. and Mrs. Bone are now called "Old Bones." Everything is changed. The autumn of their days is still composed partly of pleasure and partly of pain. But William, the once "stupid lad," now supplies their chief pleasure, while Harry, the "clever boy," furnishes all the pain. William has a wife, a child, a good business, and is himself what people call "well to do in the world." But Harry still lives with his parents, and is not likely to leave them till they leave him for—it is to be hoped—a better country! He is now repaying, with interest, the parental *attachment* of which in boyhood he was himself the innocent founder. The following is the manner in which this once "clever boy," in his own person, divides the day of twenty-four hours:—From eight in the evening till two in the morning at a singing saloon, or some other of his satanic majesty's numerous haunts; from two till twelve, *in bed*; from

twelve till eight, in eating a little, drinking a little, smoking a little, reading a little, and preparing himself again for his usual leave of absence. As Sarah, the servant, winds up the clock, her young master starts on his evening's rounds. In the immediate vicinity of the parents' habitation, the deepest sympathy is felt for poor "Old Bones!" Let us now turn to

FAMILY NUMBER TWO.

In a charming villa, at the top of Prospect Hill, lives Mr. Button, a retired tailor, who is ready to drive his family anywhere, except to church. It is not, however, through any religious scruples on the subject of driving that this exception is made in favor of the Sabbath; for while Mrs. Button and the little Buttons are walking to a place of worship, Mr. Button, the retired tailor, mounts his horse and rides to—Rotten Row, a most appropriate title, both for the course and its string of horsemen, on such a day. But William, or Billy Button, as he is commonly called, is no hypocrite. There is no "artificial morality" about *him*. If he has no taste for the *real* article, neither has he any for the counterfeit. Unlike his brother, Sandy, the Glasgow saint, he doesn't play one character at home and another abroad. Let the tailor visit his relative in the north, and the saint may try—in vain—to lead his brother, with downcast

or upcast eye, either towards the kirk, or to family devotion. Yet, on the return visit of the saint to London, the tailor can't drive his brother fast enough in an opposite direction. Turn to

FAMILY NUMBER THREE.

In taking leave of the tailor and the saint, let us descend the hill, and proceed towards the valley. Here stands Willow-tree House. Everybody knows Willow-tree House. It is inhabited by Mrs. Moss, the kind-hearted and queen-like widow, and her two lovely and accomplished daughters. The lady has not been long in her widowhood before other troubles attend her. Tom, the only boy, ceases to be a regular inhabitant of the house. It would puzzle anybody to determine his whereabouts for more than seven days in succession. He is here, there, and everywhere. He is now at home for a few hours, and doesn't fail to make the inmates aware of his presence; he is then for a few days at school, from which he retires, without leave of absence; then he is at his uncle's, from which he does the like; and he is now—nobody knows where, till he is picked up by somebody out of a nest of young scamps of the same stamp and of similar habits to those of his own. Tom is, unfortunately, "his mother's boy." Everybody, except the mother herself, knows what that is. She—poor soul!—makes the discovery when it is too

late to remedy the evil. And what, may be asked, is the chief bane to this stripling's present and future prospects? Nothing!—a mere trifle in *the way of the world!*—only the prevailing and fashionable evil among puppets of the present day—*tobacco smoke!* Tom is only sixteen years old, yet he can smoke twelve cigars in a day. “Delicious root! I always indulge in one before breakfast.” Such is Tom's boast to his companions. Writers of fulsome romance usually boast of the moral to be drawn from the poison they administer. Is there no moral to be deduced from a simple matter of fact history? Tom Moss is his “mother's boy,” and to his mother's indulgence or mistaken kindness he is indebted for the rapid growth of the weeds by which he is now encompassed. But who founded the chief folly that is leading the lad to perdition? His father was a great smoker—usually smoked his cigar before breakfast, and not unfrequently smoked eleven more cigars during the day. Is there no resemblance here between the little boy's early boast and his late father's inveterate habit? Are we not—even in childhood—the creatures of imitation? If a child be directed or induced to look to his Heavenly Father for things spiritual, will he not imitate the natural parent in things temporal? Like a little shell that holds a great kernel, this question contains the pith of the whole matter.

Turn for a few moments from artificial to real pleasure—from unnatural to natural children, or, in other words, to

FAMILY ADOPTIONS.

Here are our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Primrose, of Strawberry Vale. Though, in their charming villa, they have no young primroses of lineal descent, there is nevertheless a pretty little creature whom they call “Daisy.” Lady visitors are often curious in asking Daisy various questions concerning her parents or the district of her nativity; but the dear child is, of course, unable to gratify curiosity on a subject of which she is herself in a state of happy ignorance. Daisy has been adopted by the Primroses. With that fact let other curious flowers be content. It is not an impossible thing that extended knowledge on the subject might furnish some of the inquisitors with a *simile* for personal application.

Then, there is Brandy Bounce, the rich bachelor. This gentleman has neither brother nor sister. But there is a little boy, “Cribb,” who calls him “uncle.” In what other light but that of “an adoption” can such a child be viewed? As recorded in the first volume of this work, it will be found that the gentle and loving Amy was adopted by Honest John. Amy always called her guardian “uncle.” Yet a heavenly relationship was the only one that existed between

them. An adoption may therefore vary both in its character and its cause. It may be embraced by a charitable and childless being, not as a social tax, but as a heavenly boon; or it may be enforced by the world, and accepted by the worldly, not as a pleasing tender, but as a painful, duty.

Having—lawyer-like—referred to *other* cases, in order to justify the introduction of the case in hand, I will now faintly image “a little adoption” of my own. Beauty!—you have been a sweet, but most troublesome child. Already has this heart passed through many severe trials on account of your mysterious appearance. Even at the first sign of your distant approach—while your birth was far, very far, from being an accomplished fact—my mind was agitated by all sorts of misgivings, accompanied with that fearful suspense that left but little room to hope for a pleasing issue.

A strange or mysterious incident will often surprise or startle outside acquaintances even more than the individual whom it may immediately concern. Beauty’s advent having been gradually foreshadowed to my own mind, I was, in a measure, prepared for the event. Not so the friendly circle of eyes that suddenly light on an old acquaintance under a new aspect. The Primroses, the Nightingales, certain gentlemen of the press, and a whole host of Rosewaters and Whitekids are perfectly amazed at a

“strange revelation” concerning a late member of their own party. “Dear me! Is such really the case? How strange, to be sure! Frank Foster is the last person in the world I should have suspected of——. Well, he may still be worthy of one’s esteem, but now that he has——, I can scarcely believe it. Yet, in the present day, there is no such thing as knowing anybody.”

These or similar sensation notes, in reference to something or somebody, are frequent and familiar sounds in *the way of the world*. Let me turn again for a moment to the *cause* of the foregoing.

Who is there that does not love a pretty, innocent, and engaging child? Not a man or woman on earth whose heart can negative this question. If any two-legged animal, in the guise of either, should at the present time exist, the thing is neither a man nor a woman, but simply a human monster—a mere heartless form, without one heavenly emotion. The nearest and only beautiful mortal type of things heavenly is a guileless and lovely child—

An infant bud, before the flower
Hath felt the blast of Satan’s power.

Though I called Beauty a troublesome child, the trouble occasioned by his mysterious appearance did not arise from any imperfection in the little cherub, but originated entirely through my own anxiety con-

cerning the adoption of the most lovely babe that ever lived. The desire for concealment, and the secret fear for the permanent vitality of the infant have now passed away. Now that Beauty has grown to whisper notes of surpassing tenderness, I find him a source of true joy, rather than something to be ashamed of. This heart may appear a proud one that would make a boast of what confers honor and dignity on itself. Yet I find everybody that is *intimately* acquainted with Beauty declare him not only gentle and loving, but “a most discerning child.” Why then should *I* not be proud of him? The gracious words and sweet accents of the adopted one will furnish ample evidence for an answer. Let me first transcribe from the page of truth a little matter that made the loving child put certain questions to his guardian—questions that denote on the part of the innocent inquisitor an understanding superior to that of any other child that was ever adopted. The subject by which such gentle queries were in the first instance provoked may be found in

AN UNFORTUNATE UNION.

“I want a partner.” Such was my declaration a few years ago. And as it is not an impossible thing for a similar want to be felt, if not expressed, by many whose eyes may glance over the present pages, let me tell the reader how my own want was *not*

supplied. On the invaluable and innumerable benefits that spring from a happy union—social or commercial—it is not necessary to dwell for a single moment. The thing is too transparent to need a reflector. Nobody would object to have domestic peace and pleasure augmented ; nor would anybody object to have excessive mental or physical labour lessened, when there is no pecuniary loss involved in the change. The delightful and only way to so pleasing a consummation may be stated in three words—*a happy union*. Reverse the picture ; and of the countless and fearful evils that arise from an “unfortunate union,” the following truthful incident will furnish one.

A not unusual way of describing things of a dubious or comet-like character is by saying “they come and go in fits and starts.” A better combination of words could scarcely be made for an allusion to literary successes, which are fitful and uncertain in the extreme. Those of a sensational or extravagantly romantic character are not unlike violent fevers, both in their duration and their effect. Their reign, though brief, is usually a very warm one, while the subsequent effect of the same on the mind or morals of a patient is often the reverse of beneficial. But a book—good or bad—is not like a profession from which a permanent revenue can be depended on. Yet there are a few exceptions. One of these rare exceptions I

happened to drop on in the work of reference alluded to at the close of the first volume of "Number One." Alas, for the instability of worldly hopes and prospects! No sooner had the fact been established that the book—like a fruitful tree—would be prepared, by annual distribution, to yield a handsome income to its author, than the author was no longer enabled to contribute the necessary attention to the book. Just at the moment when the work proved a success, the author's health proved a failure. What is to be done, not merely to restore the patient's health—for that might prove a task beyond mortal power—but to insure the permanent vitality of the promising sapling that had been so successfully planted? A partnership!—yes, a partnership is the thing decided on. I resolved to advertise, and accordingly advertised, for a literary partner.

One of the gentlemen who replied to my advertisement *appeared* to be the very man for the work in question. Such was the impression created by the first interview. He had received, at Oxford, a collegiate education, and that he had not neglected his studies might fairly be inferred from the fact of his having M.A. attached to his name. He was, moreover, the author of several works, and had for some time been connected with the periodical press. Will a partnership suit him? Exactly!—it is the very thing he desired. In a few days he will call to arrange the necessary preliminaries.

A few days elapsed. Mr. Baron Walbrook, the gentleman alluded to, again made his appearance. But the day was an unfortunate one for the object of the gentleman's visit—it *was not a day for business*. Not only was the day itself an unseasonable one, but the hour of the day—near eleven a.m.—was equally inconvenient for anything beyond the ordinary salutation of “How d’ye do?” Perceiving that I was on the point of leaving the house with my family, Mr. Walbrook at once withdrew, saying, as he retired, “I will do myself the honor of calling on a future day, when I trust you may be disengaged.” Thus we parted.

“I hope that ‘future day’ may not be the *Sabbath day*,” said Mrs. Foster, as we followed the course that had been for a moment obstructed.

Virtue needs no varnish. The voice of a sensible woman may fail to provoke a response, when her words can only be answered by an echo. I pondered the lady’s words, but made no reply. The never-failing hand of time again marked another Sabbath on its dial. It was not now at eleven a.m., but at six p.m. that Mr. Baron Walbrook made his second Sunday visit.

“Ah! just going to tea?” said the gentleman as he entered. “Well, I have not long since dined; and after dinner there is nothing more refreshing than tea or coffee. I shall therefore have much pleasure in joining you.”

The duties at the tea-table were soon over. On retiring from the room, Mrs. Foster said in a subdued tone, yet sufficiently loud for all present to hear—"the bells are going, Mr. Foster."

It soon became evident that—except the lady herself—the bells were the only things that *were* going in the same direction. Mr. Walbrook had something to communicate to *my advantage*. Moral courage was not strong enough either to resist the temptation, or to ask the tempter to postpone his communication. Conscience said, "accompany your wife to church." The devil said, "you'll secure another partner by staying at home." At home I staid. Here the preliminaries of an agreement that was to be duly signed and sealed on the morrow were briefly discussed. The business conversation over, Mr. Baron Walbrook took a glass of wine and his departure.

No sooner had my partner taken leave than something sorely troubled me. The mysterious "hand-writing on the wall" that foretold Belshazzar's early doom was probably to the nerves of that impious monarch a shock of less severity than that which now agitated my own guilty conscience.

"Six days shalt thou labour," &c. Had this command of the Almighty—in letters of crimson and gold—covered the entire side of my little sitting-room, its mysterious appearance would no doubt have startled the vision and appalled the understanding.

But, in the present day, the sudden reflection of some hideous monster on the mind of an erring mortal is perhaps quite as startling in its effect as were those outward and supernatural signs by which idolators in the early stages of the world were warned and terrified. Where there is no sense there can be no feeling. Conscience is a myth, a mere figure of speech, so far as it concerns any heart into which the heavenly whisper of "a still small voice" has never penetrated. If a man does not love God, he cannot hate the devil. How can the glory of the one or the abominations of the other be reflected on the mind of such a being? But, to an enlightened understanding, the silent and secret miracles of the nineteenth century are not only as wonderful, but quite as perceptible as those external signs which were necessary to the conviction, if not for the conversion of the pagan. What mirror, except the mind's reflector, could so vividly display the act of self-condemnation of which I had just been guilty? True—there was a time when a Sunday excursion, a Sunday dinner party, or even a little Sunday labor would have caused me no concern for anything but the matter in hand—no thought of any future account that would have to be rendered for momentary and unholy pleasures. But I had now tasted divine mercy and love; not only tasted, but had already felt and acknowledged them to be the only founts from which real happiness and lasting

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joys spring. Yet here was I, the truly grateful, but *poor, frail* recipient of the richest boon that can be conferred on man, and by far the greatest blessing I had myself received since I came into the world—here was I, taking the first step, not to obtain additional peace, but to forfeit all the sweet comfort I had so recently gathered—the first step towards eternal suicide. With a view to worldly gain, I was withdrawing from the trust I had just reposed in God to lean again on the plausible promises of man. It was while the spirit was terrified with this picture, when the heart tried, in vain, to compose itself under its self-created trouble, that the gentle Beauty made his appearance. But I was not exactly in the humour for the reception even of the most loving of children ; and—unlike most children—Beauty is a child that will not suffer his love to be trifled with.

“ Well, Beauty, I am engaged just now, Beauty.”

“ Oh ! I thought you were *all alone* ? ”

“ Yes, Beauty ; but I have a little business with myself, at present.”

“ Business ? ”

“ A little business, Beauty.”

“ O, yes ; *good* business ? Not work ; no, no, not work ? ”

“ No, Beauty, not—not exactly work.”

“ No ; not work. It is God’s day. And you say ‘ we will keep it holy.’ I heard you say so this morning ; I am sure I heard you say so.”

“Beauty, do not—I am vexed—”

“With Beauty?”

Mrs. Foster, who had just returned from church, now entered the apartment.

“Have you derived much profit from your evening meditations, Mr. Foster?” politely enquired the lady. “Has Mr. Walbrook, your new pastor, completed his commercial discourse? That man is either a Roman catholic, or he is no religion at all. He will never benefit either you or your house, Mr. Foster.”

Like the sudden shock of a shower bath upon a feeble body on a frosty morning, the good housewife’s cutting sentences caused a momentary thrill to a nervous system. Without attempting a reply, I shook off the cold and icy drops as soon as possible.

Mrs. Foster’s severe and merited reproof, and Beauty’s gentle and pointed words were powerful irritants in my subsequent brief and feverish slumber. But when, on the following morning, a little soap and water had refreshed a restless head, by washing away the unwholesome odour arising from the bitter reflections of night, neither a lady’s censure, nor the love of a tender child induced me to decline the union that had been previously arranged. Yet the ugly and unholy feature of the case stimulated my resolve not to ratify any union without a distinct understanding that the new comer would pay no more business visits to his partner on the Sabbath

day. Though I had laid the foundation of the new building on that day, I now indulged the pleasing hope that the structure would be duly built and richly furnished on the proper days appointed for such purposes.

The bond of union was duly signed and sealed, and Mr. Baron Walbrook—as a considerate mark of respect both to his new partner and his family—politely but verbally accepted the condition that business visits on the Sabbath day would in future be discontinued. This condition was faithfully kept. But it was the only one that was not broken. It is enough for the reader to know that after the utter loss of twelve months—both in time and money—I was delighted to have “an unfortunate union” severed, without an appeal to the Court of Chancery. As for the book—the successful work of reference that had for three years yielded a fruitful return, with every promise that its author’s wants in this world would be amply and annually supplied—it is like yesterday, gone for ever ! Its epitaph, with the immediate cause of dissolution, may be found on the last remnant of its remains, now lying in the British Museum.

Reclining on my “old arm chair,” by the fire side, inactive and feeble from the effects of fever from which a skeleton-like frame was slowly recovering, I was one day inspired, in a remarkable degree, by gratitude to God for a happy release from that “un-

fortunate union" for which I had paid, was still paying, and was still likely to pay heavy penalties. But while the heart made a free confession of the error that led to present punishment, there arose the exciting query of "How can a poor laborer—deprived of his hire—either improve, or hope to be raised from his present position?"

It really appeared that a little child could solve a question that altogether defied and baffled the author of fifteen books. No sooner did I feel my punishment to be just, and a release therefrom to be a riddle, than the gentle and loving Beauty entered an appearance.

"Well, Beauty ; what have *you* to say, Beauty?"

"Me? I love to hear *you* say something."

"Then, the truth is, Beauty, I feel a good deal better than I have felt for some time past ; but how I shall feel or what I shall do to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, is something more than I can tell, Beauty."

"To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow it will be very easy to tell."

"True, Beauty ; but now that I am regaining my strength, I am anxious to obtain some employment. Not an easy matter that, Beauty?"

"Oh, yes ; it is a very easy thing."

"An easy thing to find a want like that supplied?"

"*You* say so."

"It is *you* that say so Beauty. Where, or to whom shall I look for aid? Tell me that, Beauty."

"You bid your children look to their Father."

"Yes, but— beloved Beauty!" I wept.

"Do you, indeed, love me?"

"You know I love you, Beauty."

"Kiss me."

The little cherub was instantly embraced. And while tears fresh and warm from the guardian's heart told of reciprocated love, they damped the sunken and pallid cheeks of the languid spirit that gradually lapsed into a refreshing slumber.

Chapter iv.

STARLIGHT.—BRILLIANT PROSPECT FOR
“NUMBER ONE”—A CARRIAGE DRAWN
—(ON PAPER.)

SEASONABLE and sunny was the morning that, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty, gave birth to the twentieth day of July. A warm room and a warm wrapper are the usual supplements to a hot bath. Equally desirable for the relaxed frame of one who has just emerged from the steam of a violent fever is the genial temperature of a warm day. Though Londoners had left town for a more bracing atmosphere, London was not too hot for *one* among the few that remained behind—for it was not too hot for me. Yet the weather was not the only thing that made a town residence desirable. London is the “big pot” from which our family porridge is supplied. For twelve months I had been unable to earn even the little salt necessary to the flavor of the repast. But *now* the chief ingredient itself—like the patient’s health—wanted replenishing. The small but heavily taxed reserve—like the spirit that had just passed through a boiling fever—was nearly exhausted. It was time, so far as increasing strength would enable me, to look about for a fresh supply of meal. Though I had not forgotten that Being to whom the loving little cherub, Beauty, had directed my attention, I knew that individual exertion was the only course to justify even a hope for aid from

above. So I was once more about to start in search for what I had lost—daily labor. Let monarchs sit in state, let nobles repose on down, or let idlers waste their time in indolence or dissipation, yet there is no mind so truly happy as that which is suitably and profitably employed; while there is no luxury so great and so acceptable to a willing laborer as a good supply of labor.

But in a country where the supply of nearly every kind of labor is greater than the demand, it is often a difficult, sometimes an impossible, task—without a friendly feather from that rich preserve called “patronage”—for either man or boy to obtain suitable employment. And it is still more difficult to regain such employment, after it has once been obtained and abandoned. Newspaper proprietors and proprietors of periodicals cannot be supposed to differ from governors in commerce or governors in anything else. They are not, at a moment’s notice, prepared to make room for old hands—however skilful such hands may be—when new ones have been allowed to supply their places. The only discovery I made during an extended round of friendly visits was simply this—that a gentleman in want of immediate and suitable employment is merely an overgrown type of that poor boy—described in the first volume of “Number One”—who, without friends or money, had to tramp the streets of London in search of his first situation.

Fatigued in body, but not depressed in spirit, I walked, or rather rode—being too tired to walk—home, after a long and fruitless search for money and mental labor. At present the result of my own *unaided* efforts was not quite so exhilarating as the genial rays of a cloudless sun. Yet the mysterious Dictator of that warmth, under which the feeblest meadow-shoot, or the wildest mountain-stem—after a violent storm—may be seen to lift its drooping head, can, and often does, with one little ray from his almighty power, gradually or suddenly raise the weather-beaten frame of a trusting child from the cold, wet, and gloomy shades of life to the sunny lawn of promise, hope, or plenty. No sooner was I strong enough, or hardly strong enough, to work; and no sooner did I reach home, after having sought work without finding it, than I was permitted to behold the first feeble reflection of what—up to the present time—has proved the most remarkable incident in an eventful career.

Thousands in *the way of the world*—probably some of the readers of the present work—will regard the origin of the event I am about to disclose as “a singular accident,” “a simple stroke of fortune,” or “a mere slice of good luck.” Many persons will see by such a light not only this, but also any similar event or events. Let me not presume to declare that such persons “see only through a glass darkly.” I will merely observe that our respective views of the

subject are entirely opposed to each other. Present space is insufficient for a partial exposition of the various shades and shadows by which I have been permitted to estimate these so called "accidents," even as reflected through the many changes of my own eventful life. By such a view, the trials and troubles, and the joys and sorrows of the world all combine to furnish one great picture of divine love and mercy—although the mysterious agency by which daily and increasing blessings are developed is even yet but dimly seen and slightly comprehended. Let a single sentence record my belief—that there never has been since the world began, and that there never will be to the end thereof, a single "accident" of any kind whatsoever; and that the commonly accepted signification of the term, as applied to daily occurrences, is altogether a *misnomer*; for, in the progressive revelation of God's decrees in the world's history, there is no such thing as "chance." Is there anything that is accidental with the Almighty? Is not every event in life, even to the "fall of a sparrow," determined by his unchangeable will, and executed by his resistless power? Shall the fruitful harvest that fills our barns and our bellies be called an "accident?" Is it by "accident" that the raging fury of the elements, or the more furious elements of the battle-field, occasionally devastate a country, and lay waste cities, towns, and villages? Or is it merely by "accident" that the

glorious opposites of peace and plenty are established? Who will declare these or any of these things to be the result of "accident?" Yet what is there to distinguish them, except their magnitude, from some family event, by which a child breaks its neck as a warning to the head of the house, or the change by which a beggar is raised to the title of a prince, or a prince reduced to the state of a beggar? If one is an "accident," all are "accidents;" if not all, then, not any. *By man*, great events only are regarded as "important." Will any one presume to say it is thus with the Almighty? Will any event, even the smallest, seem small when it shall be viewed by the microscopic light of eternity?

"If you please, sir," said Betsy, as I entered my house, after a fruitless journey to the city, "a gentleman has called to see you *twice*."

"I shall have no objection to see him *twice*, or even *three* times, if he should prove a desirable visitor. Did he leave his name, Betsy?"

"No, sir; but I have a very good opinion of him."

Betsy has generally a good opinion of any one who presents her with a miniature likeness, in silver, of Queen Victoria.

"A high opinion of him, have you, Betsy?"

"Very. He's such a good-tempered, nice-looking gentleman."

"How can you judge the temper of a stranger, girl?"

"By his looks, sir. He carries his temper in his face."

“But did he not leave his name?”

“No. He says it’s a common name, and as you don’t know him, you may clap it on somebody as you do know, by mistake. He came in a ‘Hansom,’ and he left in a ‘Hansom,’ and said he’d call again in about an hour; and its near that time since he left.”

A double, but very gentle, knock summoned Betsy to the street door. It was a modest summons, such as usually proceeds from a great or sensible man. While a broadside from the hand of a burly footman disturbs the entire neighbourhood, a gentleman generally confines the report of his signal to the household whom it may concern. Before he entered, I concluded that the stranger must be a man of mark, as “Hansom” riders either keep their own cabs, or would *like* to do so.

The “good-tempered and nice-looking gentleman” was hereupon introduced by Betsy into the presence of her master. The first glance at the stranger’s head, as the bearer entered the room in which I was already standing to greet him, was a sudden and vivid flash to the conviction that a “notable character” now confronted me. Every feature in that head bore the impress of genius. The piercing eye, and the—yet, can anything but the spirit itself reflect “the master mind?” I will not attempt the task. Better than words, a reflection, if only a faint one, through another channel, shall introduce the “illustrious stranger,” before he opens his mouth. Here he is.



2
J. M. Smith

"How do you do, Mr. Foster,—hope I see you well, sir?" softly and good-humoredly said the stranger, making a graceful bend of the body, in order to accompany his oral salute by a shake of the hand.

"Pray be seated, sir."

"Maybe you are busy this morning, Mr. Foster?" enquired the visitor in a gentle tone, and with that one-sided and pleasing expression that might have secured the attention, if not won the good opinion, of a prime minister.

"Not at all busy, sir; or if I am, it is simply on the thought of 'how I may become still more so.'"

"I have just come over from America, Mr. Foster."

"From America? May I ask whether you are an American?"

"Yes, sir; an American bred and born. And it is an honor I am proud of, Mr. Foster."

"I am pleased to hear you say so. It is a mean heart in an unworthy citizen that is ashamed of its country or its kin."

The eyes of the stranger appeared as if they were about to shoot from their sockets. Their owner rose from his seat, and approached me—not to slap my face, as I at the moment supposed, but to give me a hearty shake of the hand.

"Mr. Foster, there is a certain sympathy existing between all spirits of a kindred nature. I have a sort of intuitive perception of the character of any

one with whom I may come into contact. *Your* sentiments, sir, are *my* sentiments ; and I am now satisfied you will grant me the favor I have come to ask."

Here the speaker resumed his seat.

"Be good enough to name your favor, and I will at once tell you whether I have the power to grant it."

"Very good. Candour is at all times better than equivocation, Mr. Foster. Well, sir ; on arriving in England I put at an hotel in Liverpool. It was here that the singular *accident* occurred that induced me to call on you. I say 'singular accident,' Mr. Foster, because, had it not happened, I should not have sought your advice."

"Pardon me, sir, for interrupting you ; but you are evidently laboring under some misapprehension. I trust you have not mistaken me for a doctor ?"

"Not a bit of it, my friend ; although I believe you have a remedy for my complaint. Are you not an author ?"

"If my humble efforts entitle me to the distinction, I may reply in the affirmative."

"You are the author of a work of reference entitled —— ?"

I nodded assent.

"Has there been an edition of that work published for the current year ?"

"I believe not. So far as *I* am concerned its publication has ceased."

"Ceased for a time, I suppose?"

"Yes, for a long time—for ever."

"Indeed? Well, sir; my eye accidentally dropped on that book, as it lay on the table in the sitting-room of my hotel. On looking over its pages, I said, 'the author of that book is the first man on whom I shall call when I arrive in London.' And here I am."

"And here is the author—both ready and willing to serve you, if he has the power to do so."

"Exactly!" said the stranger, who seemed to grow more and more familiar. "And I hope he will serve himself, or let another serve him, in return."

"Not the slightest objection to that," I replied. "*Number one* is a prominent feature in England. Is it not so in America?"

"Bless your dear soul!" said the foreigner, with a suppressed laugh, "John Bull and his cousin the other side are as like as two peas in that respect, if not in any other. The first favor I have to ask you, sir, is, whether you will kindly inform me how I can obtain the names and addresses of a certain class of manufacturers in the chief cities and towns of the United Kingdom?"

I invited the gentleman to my study, and gave him the desired information on a few sheets of matter that had been compiled for that work of reference, the untimely end of which has already been recorded. The business over, we returned to the former apartment.

“ And the next favor that, at present, occurs to my mind, Mr. Foster, is to beg your acceptance of a trifle for the favor just granted. There, sir, is my card and address.”

So saying, this singular visitor placed his card on the table, and, after covering it with two guineas, took his hat and immediately proceeded towards the door.

“ I wish you very good morning, Mr. Foster.”

“ Good morning, Mr. —— ”

“ You’ll find my name on the card,” said the stranger.

“ All right. And I am exceedingly obliged to you for your unexpected and liberal——”

“ Don’t mention it, my dear sir. I always remember my friends. Good morning, Mr. Foster, good morning ! ”

“ That’s a remarkable man ! ” Such was the voluntary declaration that crossed my mind, as the mysterious visitor entered his cab and told the driver to convey him with all speed to the neighbourhood of St. John’s Wood. Time will show whether this early estimate of character was, or was not, a correct one. Even during this brief interview, the foreigner had faintly shadowed forth two little features, each tending to the immediate impression that here was the mind of an actor equal to almost any part or any emergency in life. At the same time his frank and noble countenance imparted to every

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sentence an air of truthfulness that went far to prove the speaker capable of anything but a mean action. Note, in the short dialogue, the contrast here presented between the quiet sagacity of the player when there is business in hand, and his rapid movements when that business is over; mark his scrutinizing watchfulness of an object from which some little want may be supplied, and his tiger-like eagerness to turn to immediate account anything that has been secured. In the early part of this brief interview, when his wishes were unsupplied, the stranger, while calmly surveying the object before him, and cautiously feeling his way towards the more important object he had in view, seemed himself to be both a model of patience and a living fount for the supply of general information. Any one might have premised, from the placid aspect of his demeanour and from his quick but gentle replies, that he would have retained his seat for a quarter of an hour, or for half an hour, or perhaps for an hour; that he would have gratified his new acquaintance with one or two little incidents concerning both himself and his country; or if not with a word or two on either, at least with a few words relative to the object of his visit to England, or the purpose for which certain information was required. But no,—not a syllable by way of supplement. No sooner is the desired information obtained, than “up and off!” is the stranger’s motto. He *might* have said,

but didn't say, "My present want is supplied; I have paid you for supplying it; if you are satisfied so am I; but I have not a moment either to hear or to answer another question—having more important business elsewhere." These words might have partially illustrated the rapid action with which this illustrious stranger—like a fox from a newly discovered nest—makes a hasty retreat with his morning meal, or his first supply. But our American lion did not even vouchsafe this brief explanation. It was simply, "I'm up and off!"—and off he was, like an arrow from the bow of a red Indian.

Let us examine the gentleman's card. What's the name—"Starlight?" No; that's not his name, although it may be found an appropriate one for the present purpose. Daylight itself is not strong enough for any human being—except the identical man—either to penetrate the working of that wonderful brain, or to draw more than a faint outline of the varied phases of so singular a character. I will therefore call my new acquaintance "Starlight." Beyond the constant and impartial desire to invest with truthfulness my own sketches of this twinkling little mortal luminary, those sketches, possibly, may possess but little, if any, value. But though feeble or vivid, life-like or otherwise, it is well for the reader to know that the veritable spirit itself, on which the draughtsman is engaged, is a living reality.

The haste with which Starlight, after his sudden and singular appearance, hastened his departure was now entirely eclipsed in the race by which he had already accomplished an unexpected return. Less than the time occupied in one circuit of the minute hand on a clock's dial served as an interval between the first and second visit of this mysterious stranger. Yet, as it would have taxed the energy even of a "Hansom" horse to have covered and re-covered the distance between our respective dwellings in less than forty minutes, brief indeed was the space of time, beyond that devoted to the journey, that enabled a thoughtful traveller not only to discover another little want of his own, but also to assume that such want might possibly be furnished from the source whence the last had been so promptly supplied; that, in fact, the poor author whose work had arrested Starlight's penetrating eye, might prove useful, if only as the humble precursor of a great character or a great design. Well. To my nervous, though by no means disagreeable surprise, Betsy, our talkative maid, now introduced, for the second time, the "good-tempered gentleman," of whom she had a "very good opinion." On this occasion the foreigner carried under his arm a roll of parchment, in appearance not unlike a deed of assignment from one who has nothing to assign, or a parliamentary petition from those who have nothing to expect.

All deeds however are not of equal waste ; nor are others all of equal worth.

"Very fine weather you have here, Mr. Foster," said Starlight as he entered.

Without making any verbal allusion to the cause of his sudden and strange re-appearance he at once placed his roll on the table, and took from a tin case—the size of which resembled that of an ordinary telescope—a whole regiment of documents of the most imposing character. Each staff was ornamented by colored ribbons that denoted its particular order ; while the chief or general sheet of each department bore the impress of an official or state seal, the circumference of which may—distantly—be indicated by a full moon.

"Mr. Foster, I'm an inventor ; yes, sir, I—have you ever been personally acquainted with an inventor ?" enquired Starlight.

"This is the first time I have had the honor," I replied.

"Do you know, sir, you are the man I have fixed on to do me a service ; yes, sir, and you can do it, and you *will* do it ; I know you'll do it, or I wouldn't ask you."

"If I can serve you, I shall be happy to do so," I said, remembering, as I did remember, that the gentleman had paid well for the little service already rendered.

“There, sir!” continued the visitor, as he placed before me about a dozen sheets of parchment, fresh from the American government, by whom Starlight’s invention had been tested and declared to be one of national importance and utility. “Do you see any thing there, my friend?”

“Yes; I see you are accredited as the parent of a very extraordinary invention. May I enquire whether the wonder named in these documents is your first offspring in the world of science?”

“Not the first, but by far the greatest.”

The speaker immediately took from his pocket a morocco case. This he placed in my hand with an air that implied any thing but an exalted opinion of the contents of the box. I opened the case, and took therefrom a magnificent snuff-box, composed of gold and blue enamel, bearing in the centre the imperial “N.” thickly studded with diamonds. The cover (inside) bore the following inscription:—

“PRESENTED

By their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of the French
to

MR. ———, JUN.,

OF NEW YORK, U.S.A.,

As a testimony of his genius for inventing an invaluable
——, which is destined to render important services to
humanity.

Palace of the Tuileries,
7th April, 1855.”

"The invention there referred to," said Starlight, "is a mere trifle. But here, sir,—here is something worthy of the country from which it came."

"With such evidence before me, I cannot for a moment doubt the merits of your present invention."

"Doubt!" exclaimed Starlight, in the tone of a confident general, whose sense recoils at such a word sooner than at the sound of a hundred cannon; "no, sir, there's no room for doubt."

Suiting the action to the word, he at once threw on my lap a bundle of letters from a large number of the most eminent men in America. From this batch, here are *fac-similes* of the autographs of five gentlemen whose names will be familiar to many of my readers, viz. :—James Buchanan, late President of the United States; Lieutenant-General Winfield Scott, who holds a position in America corresponding with that formerly held in England by the late Duke of Wellington; Hon. Edward Everett, the eminent author, patriot, and statesman; Hill H. Seward, the present Secretary of State; and Cyrus W. Field, of Atlantic Telegraph notoriety.

A facsimile of the signature of James Buchanan, written in a flowing, cursive script. The signature is preceded by a long, horizontal flourish.A facsimile of the signature of Winfield Scott, written in a cursive script. The signature is preceded by a long, horizontal flourish.

Sincerely yours,
Edward Everett.

Anthony
Allen W. Lewis

Yours W. Field—

“I fear, sir, you are doomed to become an eminent man,” I remarked, at the close of the epistolary inspection.

“Doomed?” said Starlight, with marked emphasis, as if unable or unwilling to reconcile a cloudy prophecy with so fair a distinction.

“I say doomed, Mr. Starlight—because there are so many rich or eminent men in the world who stand more in need of pity than envy.”

“Very true, Mr. Foster; but this is slightly diverging from our subject. Pity for greatness often comes from those who think it a pity they are not themselves great, so that others might pity *them*. As for envy—it’s the first cousin of the other. Do you know what the French Emperor said to me?”

“Really, Mr. Starlight, I—I can’t help laughing?”

“These were the Emperor’s words, sir—‘In war, *time* is an element of victory.’ It is even so with a great invention. It can only benefit its author for a few brief years, though it may benefit the world for ever. There is no time to lose. You understand me, Mr. Foster?”

“Perfectly.”

“And you have a good opinion of the merits of my invention?”

“I have a high opinion of the evidence on the subject.”

“But would rather trust your own eyes than others’ words?”

“I didn’t say so.”

“No, sir; a discreet tongue doesn’t tell the secrets of the council chamber; and I will not presume to define your thoughts, Mr. Foster. Well, sir. You are the first man in this country to whom I have breathed a syllable on the present subject. So soon as my machinery is fixed and ready to operate, you will be the first man in this country that I shall

invite to see the practical operation of my invention. Do you know why, Mr. Foster?"

"That's another puzzle, Mr. Starlight."

"Why, sir, simply because you can assist me; and if you do so, I shall be happy to return the compliment."

"Believe me, sir, I —"

"I know what you are going to say—'You will be happy to render me any assistance in your power?' I know that, my friend. You may smile, but is it not as I say?"

I signified assent.

"Well, sir; I am an inventor, not an author."

"Pardon me, Mr. Starlight; you cannot be the greater without being the lesser character also."

"Well; we are brothers, but our departments differ. If I have a head for metal, have you not a ready hand for the same? I can master almost anything in steel, except a steel pen. That, sir, is a point relating to my invention that I wish *you* to undertake. I want you to describe what I have invented."

"As I before observed, it will afford me —"

"Yes, sir," said Starlight, as increasing warmth on the subject prevented any but his own words being heard, much less noticed,—“You shall see the application of machinery to something that will astonish the world.”

"It will certainly astonish that particular class

whose labors you are about to turn upside down; for I perceive by the evidence before me that, by your new process of manufacture, you begin work at a point where others leave off, and finish where others begin, and that you can accomplish in five hours, at a fourth of the cost for labor, that which at present occupies ten days. Is it not so?"

"Exactly,—you have a text for the whole story. You have only to illustrate the subject in a manner worthy of the subject you have to illustrate; then, sir, the victory will be easily won, and our fortunes as easily made."

"The thing *sounds* well, Mr. Starlight. If the effect should only prove equal to the report—"

"If—'*if*' is only another name for doubt; and I tell you, sir, there is no doubt about the matter. Bless your dear soul!" continued Starlight, pointing to the time-piece, "is the world to stand still? If not, science must advance. When the sun shall go backward and the moon refuse to shine, Starlight, and every other little luminary in the scientific world, will then, but not till then, be snuffed out. I'm no novice in these things, my friend; I have been an inventor from boyhood upward. In 1854 I was introduced to Queen Victoria, and after exhibiting to Her Majesty my little invention of that day, I obtained for it not only a favorable recognition and royal patronage, but also the substantial results

arising from the successful application of science to an article of utility. I have made a fortune by inventions, but have expended the whole of it in bringing to perfection the greatest invention of them all. (Starlight now grew warm and eloquent.) This, sir—this invention, Mr. Foster, stands alone. The new system it will introduce to the world is as far above the old one, as are the principles of a modern capped rifle to the action of an old flint-locked blunderbuss. As for royal patronage—I can dispense with that altogether. The invention must itself insure that patronage by which royalty is created—that on which alone royalty can permanently exist—that, sir, without which royalty itself would be, as it sometimes proves to be, a mere bauble, or an empty name.”

“I presume, Mr. Starlight, that this mighty power to which you allude is—”

“The mighty voice of a great and united people. Yes, sir; that voice is the only royal patronage needed for anything that represents—in miniature—its own greatness. On the aye or nay of that power I am content to let my invention stand or fall—sink or swim. It is something, sir, that will confer honor on, rather than be honored by, its adopters; it is an invention, sir, that will place in the hands of Great Britain a power that will add to her present and increase her future fame—as the brightest star that

ever illumined the commerciale hemisphere ; in fine, sir, it is an invention the possession of which will make England the envy of other nations, while other nations—*one* excepted—will fail to approach what they would fain imitate. Now, Mr. Foster, you have a rough outline for your subject.”

“ Unless furnished by yourself, Mr. Starlight, I fear the body of the picture will be less strongly marked than the outline.”

“ Bless your dear soul ! ” continued Starlight, with a smile, “ I have given you only a faint idea—a mere shadow of the thing itself. The magnitude and majesty of the invention, or series of inventions, will tell their own tale. But as the factory will not contain the whole world, and as I am not aware of any invention by which a thousand acres of human beings may be seated, or even find standing room, on half an acre of land, I want you to transcribe the story for the benefit of outsiders. As for remuneration—just leave that to me. I’ll do the thing ‘grand!’—everybody that knows Starlight knows that he always does the thing ‘handsome.’ Good night, Mr. Foster, good night ; I’ll see you early in the morning, Mr. Foster, early in the morning.”

“ Mrs. Foster, Mr. Starlight—Mr. Starlight, Mrs. Foster,” I said, on the lady and gentleman meeting in the hall.

“ Just returned from a walk this fine evening ? ”

enquired Starlight. "Do you prefer walking to riding, Mrs. Foster?"

"Sometimes, sir," said the lady.

"And sometimes *not*. Would rather ride in your own carriage than in anybody else's, would you not, Mrs. Foster?"

"Such a preference would not, I think, be an unnatural one," replied the lady, with a smile.

"Pardon a stranger for making the enquiry, Mrs. Foster, but you will shortly be in a position to make your own choice in the matter. Wish you very good evening, Mrs. Foster; your husband and I already understand each other. Good evening, Mr. Foster. I intend to do the thing 'grand,' my friend. Good night!"

Starlight again entered his "Hansom," and told the driver to drive him home "like sixty."

"I like the look and manner of your new acquaintance, Mr. Foster," said the lady. "There is an evident earnestness about the man; but is there not a little of the spirit of imaginative poetry in his words? If we are really to ride in a grand carriage, you had better, in order to secure the due delivery of the article, have it first drawn in black and white. You understand me, Mr. Foster?"

"Perfectly, Mrs. Foster, and if an engagement or partnership—"

"No partnership," exclaimed the lady.

“Well ; should an engagement ensue, the terms thereof shall be discussed and settled on any day in the week but *one* day? You understand me, Mrs. Foster?”

“I am happy to say I do understand you, Mr. Foster.”

Early on the following morning Starlight paid his promised visit, which was succeeded by one, two, or three daily visits for more than three months. A few brief sentences will furnish a summary of the preliminaries which, during that period, were made for a grand demonstration at the end thereof. It is necessary that the reader should know something of the magnitude of the scientific wonder, in order to reconcile the mind to the large figures by which the inventor estimated the value of his work. Starlight's new process, by which he was about to revolutionize an important branch of naval architecture, was not simply one invention, but a series of inventions. Like a tree with many branches the system embraced numerous connecting links, each and all contributing to one grand result. In bringing to perfection this great combination of scientific appliances, Starlight had (as he said) been engaged eighteen years, while the monetary outlay involved in the undertaking was stated to be forty thousand pounds sterling. Such was the amount given in round numbers. It is just possible that a little squaring of these figures might

have taken more than a little from the "grand total." Be this as it may, the whole affair was one of great beauty and magnitude. Starlight had not only brought all his machinery to this country, but also a large staff of men to erect the same—while its simple erection would occupy from three to four months. A large premium had been paid for the use (temporary as was then supposed) of an extensive factory—with steam power—for the purpose of convincing the English government of the existence of an invention the adoption of which it would be impossible to resist. *Three hundred thousand pounds sterling!* would—by Starlight's vision—be a fair, and only a fair, return for ceding his entire series of patents to the English government. But, as will presently appear, the views of a government may differ from those of an inventor, while it may sometimes be a difficult thing for an inventor to obtain even an insight into such views—supposing any to exist on the subject. For my own part, I not only believed in the practical character and value of what Starlight had invented, but I also believed that some means or other, or somebody or other would be found to insure a large sum—probably one-third of what the inventor wanted—for the invention. Time will show how far such an opinion was justified by subsequent events.

Though satisfied of the brilliancy of Starlight's scientific achievements, and imbued with a natural

desire to give him credit for his good intentions, as indicated by many fair promises, I was still inclined to favor a lady's view of business matters, by trusting to words on paper rather than to those on the tongue. Starlight being anxious for my services, I prepared for that gentleman's early inspection and acceptance the draft of an agreement on which those services might be obtained. The substance of that paper may be given in a few words, viz.—an engagement on my part to promote to the best of my ability, and by every legitimate means in my power, the sale or adoption—in England—of the invention in question; and an engagement on the part of the inventor to pay £10 per month for incidental expenses and the following commission on the sale of his invention—two per cent. on any amount from £100,000 downward; one and a half per cent. on any sum between £100,000 and £200,000; or one per cent. on any sum above £200,000. In the event of no sale being effected I was to have no claim on the inventor for any remuneration whatever. Starlight declared himself both surprised and delighted with the “modesty” of the demand, and promised the *trifling* additions of £5,000 and a carriage, if his own expectations should only be partially realized. Without taking these *little* gratuities into consideration, I was not only satisfied with the prospect of a pecuniary reward but with the looming and still greater honor of intro-

ducing into Great Britain an invention of the national utility of which I had no doubt whatever.

My whole heart and energies were now embarked in the undertaking. The task was a pleasing one, because agreeable to the taste. It was not less pleasing in another and more worldly point of view. I had no doubt that in less than four months the great scientific wonder would, in a pecuniary sense, benefit the inventor at least to the extent of £100,000 and thereby place into the hands of Frank Foster the handsome sum of £2,000—even supposing the additional little gratuities to be overlooked or forgotten. The reader may infer, without being told, that the author of “Number One” had not yet discovered any literary path or garden in the world from which he could pluck two thousand “golden pippins” in the brief space of four months. Charming as was the present view of making so much money in so brief a space of time, this was by no means the only or even the most agreeable part of a pleasing prospect. Had my services been required merely for the prosecution of the vulgar *£ s. d.* design of raising a monetary pile by some commercial speculation, the affair would have been declined, or, if accepted at all, accepted only with the selfish view of making money at the sacrifice of every finer feeling. But here was something that promised to be both agreeable and productive—an occupation in unison with the dispo-

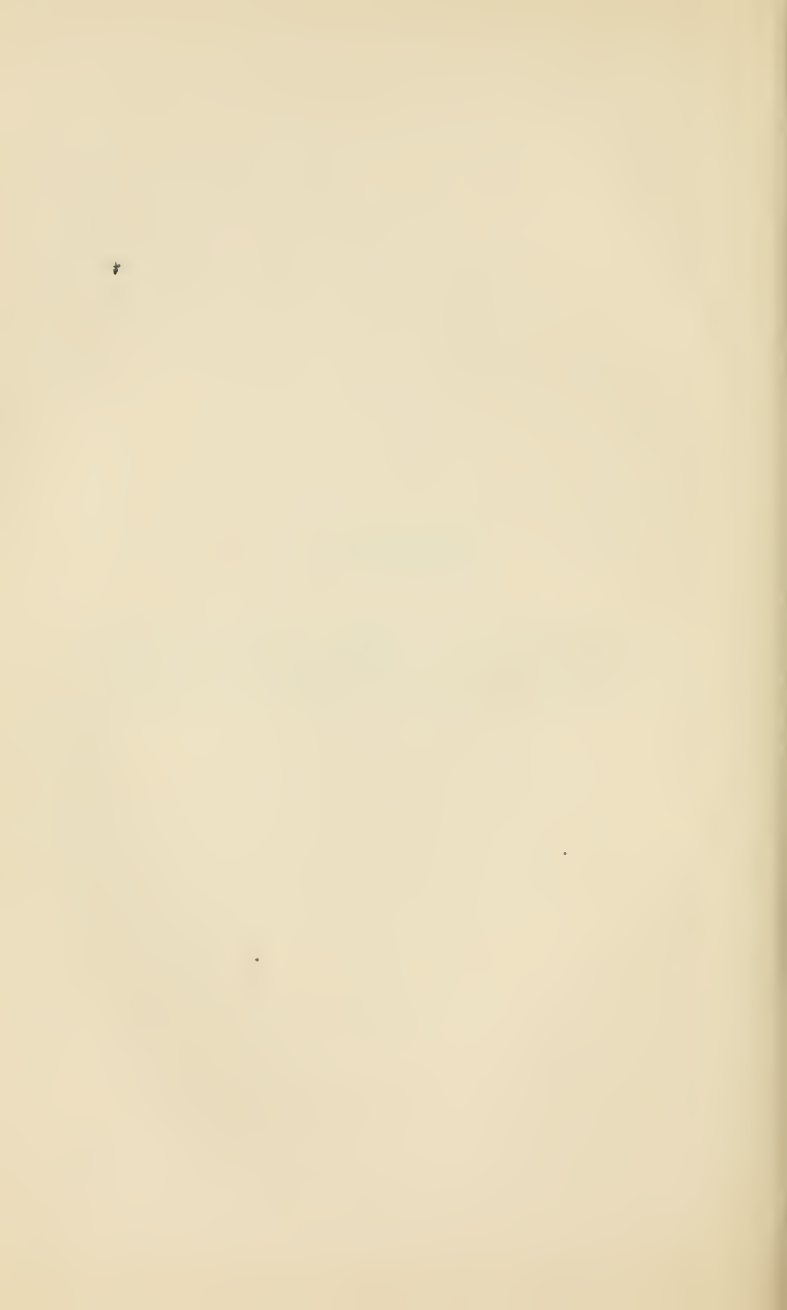
sition of the mind while it promised to supply the material wants of the body.

Will any one contradict me when I declare that, in *my* case, Providence was like a kind mother, guarding and helping an otherwise helpless child? Can you not, reader, point to some, if not to every event or change in your own life, in which you trace the guiding hand of God? Or do you attribute such changes or events, like that I have just unfolded to mere *accident*? You may, if you please, call it an accident that led Starlight, on his arrival in Liverpool, to an hotel, where his vision *accidentally* lighted on a book the author of which happened to be the man he wanted. You may call all these and similar things “accidental.” But you must permit some people to view them by another light. I am not dealing in gilded or mystified fiction, but in unadorned and simple fact. Did I not see with my own eyes, not only see, but feel from the bottom of my heart, not only feel, but know from the teaching of my inmost soul, that both the smiles and the frowns of the Almighty all tend to benefit those who thus receive them, I could not declare, as I now do, that it is only with this belief—I may say with the actual knowledge of these things—that I have been permitted a taste, a little taste, of *real happiness*. “Ah”—some of my readers may exclaim—“he simply *persuaded* himself he was happy while under affliction,

because he hoped soon to be relieved from it ; and he persuades himself he is happy *now*, because he has a prospect of soon obtaining that consoler—gold—which will make him happy.” Let such observers observe further, and read on ! On this matter I will simply record the result of my own experience—nothing more. In leading the reader through some strange scenes *in the way of the world* ; through “marble halls” and dark alleys, he must himself judge both of men and matter—whether happiness is to be found anywhere, except in the secret and silent chambers of a contented heart.

Chapter 6.

STARLIGHT AT THE ADMIRALTY.—
OFFICIAL WAY OF DOING BUSINESS.



SINCE my first and singular introduction to Starlight, one hundred and twenty days have been numbered with the past. Having in the interval satisfied myself of the extraordinary powers of an invention, the machinery of which had taken four months to erect, I was now prepared—so far as such preparation could be effected by the humble pen of a literary laborer—to satisfy the world at large, and the English government in particular, that Starlight was the patentee of something that the world at large, and the English government in particular, *ought* to possess. A pamphlet, illustrated with drawings of a dozen of the principal machines used in Starlight's invention was now ready to say a few words to strangers, and to invite those who might prefer to come and see and hear the machines speak for themselves.

Starlight's first and full blown hope for the sale of his invention rested on the English government. But Starlight had never before pitched his expectations in the like quarter, and knew not the sandy character of such a foundation. Other inventors have, no doubt trusted, as others will again trust, to government aid, till it has been sought and—found wanting. But, as will presently appear, Starlight

succeeded in obtaining even from this quarter more than is usually obtained by the majority of inventors.

Now then for the first call in the United Kingdom, with the view to the disposal of one of the greatest scientific wonders of the present age. On whom is this call to be made?—on the first Lord of the Admiralty. The way to that all-powerful magnate is by no means an easy one. But Starlight is a far-seeing man. His penetrating eye can at once detect any impediment to the attainment of a particular object. Long-sighted indeed, is the animal that can see from one side of the Atlantic to the other. Yet Starlight, while on the other side, clearly saw a few of the obstacles that might stand in his way on this side. Like a shrewd mariner, bound on some untried or doubtful course, he provided himself with instruments that would probably lessen the difficulties of the passage. That man who is first to “turn up his nose” at the “powers that be” is generally the very first man to bend his knee to those powers, when there is anything to be gained by the lowly submission. Though Starlight doesn’t “turn up his nose” at anybody, but affects to be in good humour with everybody, he knows human nature too well not to take advantage of her weak points. Knowing the influence of certain little things on certain great men, he never fails to apply those little things where nobler appliances would altogether fail. When in

furtherance of a design he is unable to obtain a direct line of communication between sovereign power and sovereign power, his next move is to obtain a line from some one who has direct influence at court ; or, this failing, he will take a smaller line from somebody to somebody who knows somebody at court. Though unable in America to discover any stray knight of the garter who could boast either of personal acquaintance with, or princely influence over, the great Duke of Somerset, he nevertheless found a gentleman who had a friend whose friend was the particular friend of an intimate friend of the first Lord of the Admiralty. Starlight knew that in England aristocratic influence and power had ever been and still were instinctive elements in the national character. He knew that with these aids to fortune in *the way of the world* many points are often gained that would never have been gained without them ; and that although they are not always sure passports to permanent success or popular applause, they may nevertheless lead a traveller some distance on his journey, or make his path less difficult than it otherwise would be. Although the land of "stars and stripes" had never fostered children of the "star and garter" order, she was the parent of those that have become as truly great and greatly noble as any that were ever nursed on the lap of luxury ; and far greater than the sweet innocents who enter into, and subsequently

fill a large space in the world, as the lineal descendants and inheritors of ducal greatness, but without displaying any other merit on their vast domain beyond that of being born to it. Starlight was acquainted with a gentleman who was acquainted with that eminent American the Hon. Edward Everett; and the Hon. Edward Everett (or the Hon. John P. Kennedy) happened to be on terms of intimacy with Sir Charles Wood, and Sir Charles Wood happened to be an old and intimate friend of His Grace the Duke of Somerset. Here then was the connecting link by which Starlight's invention might be placed before the head of the naval department. Had the line not extended from Sir Charles to the Admiralty, the probability is that neither Starlight nor the present recorder would ever have shaken hands with His Grace the Duke of Somerset—no; not if Starlight's invention had been "first wrangler" in the world of science. Even with his present high and friendly introductions it was not an easy task to place the result of his scientific studies in a clear light before unscientific eyes.

Young inventors, who have not yet ventured on a national channel for the disposal of their wares, may gather some little knowledge on the subject from a brief account of

AN INVENTOR TAKING HIS PRODUCE TO A GOVERNMENT
MARKET.

Like a merry mountain maid on a full panniered

nag, jogging to some pretty little town with the choicest stores, Starlight was all hope and expectation, as, with a roll of official documents, a gold box from the Emperor Napoleon, and an introductory letter from Sir Charles Wood, he proceeded to that great naval palace—the Admiralty—with abundant evidence of the value of the commodity he had for sale.

There is a striking internal, if not external, likeness between all government offices. From the basement to the attic of every department may be found that stoical indifference to surrounding objects that imparts to the inmates an appearance not unlike the numerous columns of masonry by which they are surrounded. That active evidence which in a mercantile house tells the spectator that the *employés* are the mainsprings, or at least contribute largely to the support of the establishment, is entirely reversed by offices in which officers are liberally rewarded for doing nothing—many of whom fail to discharge even this little public duty in a becoming and graceful manner. By some of these loungers, who always complain of ill-requited service, and expect extra pay for what they have already rendered, I am forcibly reminded of a worthy minister in a village not far from Hereford—I mustn't tell *where*. During the last twelve years this (*singular* I hope) divine has favored his parishioners with one, and *only one*, service a week—why? Because for the

last twelve years he has been expecting the death of another minister who is not yet dead, but who still does duty once a week at a church not far from the heir apparent, who, on his ascension, intends to devote Sunday afternoon—which has been reserved for that special purpose for twelve years—to his new living. This division of labor must not be complained of, inasmuch as the worthy minister cannot take from his present hearers^{*} what he never gave them.

Any one would suppose that in a great maritime country, and in the first naval department of the first nation and first navy in the world, there must be a good deal of business doing at “head quarters.” This supposition is strengthened by the great length of time it takes to transact business here; and the idea is only dispelled when the transactor discovers the way in which business is, or rather is *not*, transacted. Genteel families who are “partial to the water,” but object to “slops,” usually “put out the washing.” It is thus at the great naval lounge, or ducal “flag ship” in Whitehall. There is a good deal of work doing, and a good deal more to be done for the establishment, but the greater part of it is “put out.” Everything justifies the conclusion. The staff of liveried footmen, with powdered scalps, at the side entrance or state saloon of this stationary “hulk” is the first thing to indicate that some of the officers at least are at war with the interests of the national

paymaster. Enter the great central or commercial gangway, and you find, reposing in the most graceful attitudes of ease and comfort to themselves, three gentlemanly porters, who resemble their master in everything but in appearance, which is decidedly in favor of the men, neither of whom would feel himself complimented by being mistaken for a lord. The chief business of this well-dressed *trio* is to sit by a roaring fire in the hall—with newspaper, of course—during the winter; and in the summer to fan themselves with any gentle breeze that may enter from the outer court or enclosed square. And the occupation of these gentlemen is a fair type of all that is going on, either below or aloft, in this national hulk, called the “Admiralty.”

Follow Starlight and judge for yourself.

“Is the Duke of Somerset at home?” enquired our hero of one of the *trio* of gentlemanly porters.

“Your business with His Grace?” enquired the porter.

“Sir!” said Starlight with an emphasis and good humour that seemed to surprise his interrogator, “is it usual in this establishment to reply to a question by asking another?”

“I merely wish—”

“So do I,” said Starlight, interrupting the man—
“I merely wish to know the custom of the place, as I am a stranger in this part of the world.”

"If you tell me your business with the Duke—"

"Pardon me, sir,—with *your* permission, I would rather tell that to the Duke," said Starlight.

"We are not permitted to—"

"If I can't get your permission," continued Starlight, looking first one side of the hall and then on the other, like a pigeon that hesitates before taking a *direct* course, "I must try to make way without it."

"Just enquire whether the Duke is in his room," said porter *number one* to porter *number two*, as he turned in seeming disgust from the stranger who would tell his business *only* to those whom it concerned.

"Your name, sir, if you please?" said porter *number two*, on his return to the hall.

"For whom is the name required?" said Starlight.

"Captain Moore wants your name," replied the porter.

"I don't want Captain Moore, my good man; I want the Duke of Somerset," said Starlight.

"You can see the Duke only through his private secretary," replied the porter.

"And who *is* his private secretary," said Starlight.

"Captain Moore," replied the porter.

"I understand you," said Starlight; "and now that I know the custom of the place I am ready to conform to it. If the man I want to see can be seen only through a man I don't want to see—why, I shall

be glad to see the man I don't want to see. I will thank you to give this letter to the gentleman."

The letter was taken somewhere in a southerly direction; and it was no sooner taken than porter *number two* called down to porter *number three*, who thereupon said to Starlight and his attendant—

"Walk this way, gentlemen."

Without attempting to describe the effect of this welcome summons on Starlight's feelings, I will simply say that pleasing was the sensation that induced me to believe we were already on a fair way towards the attainment of a *great object*.

"This way, gentlemen, if you please," continued the guide, as he opened a door in a passage on the left of the hall,—“This is the waiting-room,” he said, as we entered a large dismal apartment, in one corner of which sat an individual whose appearance bore a striking resemblance to the place.

What a damper! a cold and cheerless waiting-room, instead of the anticipated cheerful welcome from the first lord of the establishment.

"Never mind!" said Starlight, in a whisper, "he won't keep us waiting long."

"Won't he, Starlight?" I rejoined.

Starlight and I had grown sufficiently familiar to dispense with the formal *mister* to our respective titles.

"Do you know, my friend," said Starlight, after we had been waiting for about two hours, "I have

heard of men being called ‘animals.’ But that’s not what I was thinking about. I was just thinking that people may call things by what names they please ; but there is at least *one* thing in this establishment that has not been misnamed.”

“What’s that, Starlight?”

“The room in which we are now seated, my friend.”

“I fear, Starlight, that Sir Charles may have said too much in his letter—by begging to introduce not only you, but your object.”

“Let us settle one thing at a time,” said Starlight, with a kind of forced but playful humour, as that irritant which young ladies call “the fidgets” kept him on a continual move from one side of his chair to the other, and with one knee (alternately) above the other. “Is this a waiting-room?—that’s the question.”

“There is no question about it, Starlight.”

“Yet an active mind cannot live anywhere and not gather knowledge. Do you know, Foster, I have just made myself acquainted with something that ought to be the *first* lesson for every young noble in creation—it’s a great lesson, my friend.”

“What is it, Starlight?”

“Simply this, that—except by a mere animal—there is nothing in the world so difficult to kill, or so painful in being compelled to kill, as *time*.”

At the close of this remark, Starlight whispered in

my ear, "Now we have decided that this is a '*waiting-room*,' let us say a word to that cheerless looking object in the corner there."

"Fine day to-day, sir," said Starlight, as he crossed the room towards the gentleman in the corner.

"Is it? It was raining when I came in," said the stranger.

Notwithstanding this remark, Starlight subsequently referred to the gentleman as "a very *dry* character."

"Perhaps you *reside* in these parts, sir?" said Starlight.

"Reside!" exclaimed the human oddity. "I'm waiting to see the Duke of Somerset."

"Been waiting long?" enquired Starlight.

"About ten days," said the stranger.

With an involuntary elevation of both hands, Starlight not only expressed surprise by the action of his arms, but he launched out into probably a heartier roll of laughter than had overtaken him since he crossed the Atlantic.

"Pardon me, sir," said Starlight, "but I really can't help —"

"Laugh on!" said the stranger. "I'd join you if I could, but I can't. I'm an inventor."

"Are you, indeed, sir?" said Starlight, who never reveals either his profession or the subject thereof to strangers.

"Yes, sir," continued the gentleman; "I have invented a new propeller."

"For propelling ships, I suppose?"

"Yes. If it could only be applied to men as well as to ships, some of the large craft in this harbour would have to expedite their movements, or I'd make 'em fancy the very d—l had hold of 'em."

"It seems a difficult thing to obtain access to your great folks?" said Starlight.

"Yes—except by their own clan," replied the stranger.

"But the difficulty will always exist where the marks of distinction between man and man are so great. It is not so in *my* country."

"What country is that?" enquired the stranger.

"America—I have the honor to be an American, sir."

"And are not Americans served in this fashion?"

"*Here* they are—but not there. No, sir; it is there with the humblest as with the highest citizen. When either or both have business with the head of the land, they go to the White House and enquire for the President. If the President should not be engaged he sees them at once; if otherwise, he sees them in their regular turn."

"In that case big men must have a good deal of their time wasted with little ones."

"Not a bit of it, sir," said Starlight. "The length of an interview is measured by the import of the

business. If the business be unimportant, the visitor, whoever he may be, is quickly despatched, in order to make room for another."

When Starlight and the English inventor had conversed for some time on the sayings and doings peculiar to their respective countries, and after we had passed more than four hours in what was truly called "the waiting-room," a well dressed man—neither porter *number one*, *number two*, nor *number three*—entered, and said—

"Are you waiting to see anybody, gentlemen?"

"This gentleman has been waiting longer than me," said Starlight, as he directed attention to the English inventor.

"Yes; but it's not '*first come first serve*.' I've waited four hours a day for ten days to see the Duke, without seeing him. But if my time's come, I'm quite ready."

"The Duke has just left for the day," said the official, as he himself appeared about to follow suit.

"Then, Foster, we had better do likewise," said Starlight.

"The same here," said the English inventor, as he rose from his seat and left the room.

"Foster," said Starlight emphatically, as he entered a cab, "I intend to see this man, the Duke of Somerset, and to make him *see me*, before the expiration of forty-eight hours from the present time. Call on me at twelve to-morrow."

I called at the appointed time. Starlight had a cab in waiting, and we were again conveyed to the Admiralty. He entered, passed porters *number one, two, and three*, looked into the waiting-room, saw the English inventor who had entered on his eleventh day, immediately retraced his steps to the hall, and took up a position near the entrance. A gentleman shortly afterwards entered, and without speaking to the porters turned up a narrow passage to the left, till he reached a flight of stairs, at the bottom of which, in a sort of watchman's box, sat a stately official. At a respectable distance, Starlight had followed and noted the stranger, who, on reaching the sentinel, said—

“Is the Duke up stairs?”

“What name, if you please, sir?” said the official.

“Lord ——,” replied the visitor.

“I’ll send up your name, my lord,” replied the official, by whom a deputy was at once despatched.

In less time than it takes to record the fact, the messenger had returned with the announcement of—

“The Duke will be happy to see you, my lord.”

Only a few minutes elapsed from this time when another gentleman appeared at the sentinel's box, and addressed to its inmate the enquiry of—

“Is the Duke above?”

“Your name, sir, if you please?” said the officer.

“Private secretary, with message from Sir George ——,” said the gentleman.

“Be good enough to walk up and take a seat in the ante-room. The Duke will soon be disengaged. I’ll send in your name.”

“Follow me, Foster,” said Starlight, as he withdrew from the passage, from the hall, and from the establishment with as much haste as if he had been suddenly seized by some internal or external complaint, while at the same instant his mind had fixed on some spot or plan for a remedy.

“Have you any objection to be called my *private secretary*?” he enquired.

“Not the slightest objection,” I replied.

“Then call on me at twelve to-morrow,” he said; and so saying, he entered a cab and drove off.

At the appointed hour I again called on Starlight, and was again driven with all haste towards the company of “naval civilians” in Whitehall. The only remark relating to the body made by Starlight during the ride was one touching the question—“Why is it not as necessary for the commander-in-chief of the navy to be a sailor, as for the commander-in-chief of the army to be a soldier?” Without breathing a word concerning the course of action he was about to pursue on the occasion of this his third visit to the Admiralty, Starlight, on his entrance, simply repeated the words he employed on his exit the previous day, by saying—in a whisper—“Follow me!”

Passing porters *number one, two, and three*, we pro-

ceeded down the passage on the left of the hall till we reached the private sentinel, who was seated in his box at the bottom of the stairs, reading the newspaper.

“Is the Duke above?” enquired Starlight, in that firm, quick tone of voice by which an impression was conveyed to the official, not only that the speaker was himself of importance, but also the subject he had to communicate.

“Your name, sir, if you please?” said the officer.

“Special messenger from Sir Charles Wood, and private secretary,” replied Starlight.

“The Duke is in his room and quite disengaged. Please to follow me,” said the officer.

Having ascended a flight of stairs, our guide opened the door of an apartment into which we were desired to enter.

“These gentlemen, Captain Moore, have important business with the Duke,” said the officer, who thereupon left the room and closed the door.

“I am the Duke’s private secretary,” said Captain Moore. “Will you be good enough to inform me the nature of your business?”

“No, sir!” was Starlight’s emphatic reply. “It is a private matter for the Duke alone.”

“If you will give me your name, I will take it to His Grace,” coolly replied Captain Moore.

“Special messenger from Sir Charles Wood, and private secretary,” said Starlight.

This announcement produced an immediate and perceptible change in the bearing of the gallant captain. The cold words and sullen look, that denoted anything but a disposition to willing obedience, were now succeeded by smiles and a manner at once affable and pleasing.

"If you will kindly take a seat, gentlemen, I'll at once inform the Duke of your presence," said the captain, who hastily proceeded, by way of a private door, from his own to an inner apartment.

"The Duke will be disengaged and happy to see you in a few moments," said the gentleman, on his return.

A few moments only had elapsed when we were conducted to the presence of a little gentleman, whose appearance in no way denoted the important position filled by His Grace the Duke of Somerset. In the most affable manner, he greeted us on our entrance by a shake of his almost royal hand, desiring each to be seated, and at the same time seating himself.

"My private secretary, sir," said Starlight to the Duke.

"You are, I believe, the bearer of a message from Sir Charles Wood?" said the Duke to Starlight.

"Yes, sir," replied Starlight, as he rose from his seat and approached His Grace with a roll of official documents relating to his invention. "I left Sir Charles' letter here three days ago."

With the disappointed look and manner of a person who has been "taken in," or who—as in this case—had taken in those whose subject he had no *immediate* intention to entertain, the Duke said—

"Sit down, sir, pray sit down," as he took the documents from Starlight and placed them on the table before him, without even glancing his eye over their contents.

A trifling incident will sometimes infuse into an unwelcome subject or dull discourse a touch of mirth that makes an audience bear what would otherwise prove unbearable. On vacating his chair, Starlight had placed his hat thereon ; and when, at the Duke's command, he receded a few steps—backward—to sit down, he sat plump on his shining American *chapeau*, which, with a terrible crash, was at once crushed as flat as a pancake. The Duke laughed, and Starlight laughed, and I laughed ; and while we were at once on better terms with the leader of the laugh, it became evident that Starlight had gained a point on what related to his head, though he had lost one in the trifling sacrifice of its cover.

"I almost forget the subject of Sir Charles Wood's communication," said the Duke, as he took the American documents from the table and began to inspect them. "Oh, yes, I remember ; he spoke of some new invention. Are you the inventor ?"

"Yes, sir ; I am the inventor," said Starlight.

“ Mr. —, from New York, is it not ? ”

“ Yes, sir ; from Brooklyn, New York,” said Starlight.

“ And what do you wish the Lords of the Admiralty to do in this matter ? ” enquired the Duke.

“ I have brought the whole of my machinery, and a staff of men, to this country in order to show you the practical operation of an invention in which you cannot fail to feel even a greater interest than that felt by the inventor himself.”

“ Well, sir,” said the Duke, with a smile, “ since you have taken so much trouble, and as my friend, Sir Charles Wood, wishes the Lords of the Admiralty to see your invention, I will endeavour to name some time during the present or ensuing month for the purpose.”

“ I shall be glad, sir, if you can fix an earlier date, as my expenses are about ten pounds a day, and as I have no intention to let any one—not even royalty itself—see my invention till you have yourself tested its practical character and value.”

The Duke, after opening his eyes to the full extent of which they were capable, as if alarmed at the responsibility even a sight of the invention might incur, said—

“ Let me clearly understand you, sir, before I make any promise on the subject. The inspection of your invention on our part will not, I presume, bind us to any future action in the matter ? ”

“Certainly not, sir,” said Starlight. “But I doubt not you have the interests of this great nation at heart.”

The Duke smiled, rang the bell, and, on the appearance of an official, requested the presence of Lord Paget. After a few moments’ conversation with his lordship—who afterwards retired—the Duke said—

“If this day week will suit your convenience, we will name that day for a visit to your factory, where we will meet you at two o’clock.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Starlight, as his eyes sparkled from the effect of the pleasing intelligence. “But the factory is in a remote locality in the vicinity of the Victoria Park, and about five miles from here. You will never find it without a guide, sir,” said Starlight.

“Then if you will attend here at one o’clock on the appointed day, we will accompany you. Good morning, sir,” said the Duke.

On returning the salute, we retired from the presence of His Grace, and Starlight proceeded to a neighbouring store, in order to cover with a new hat that wonderful head on which had just lighted the pleasing hope that in a few days its own darling offspring would be crowned with success.

After this and subsequent interviews with lords and dukes, during which Starlight never addressed either lord or duke by any title but that of “Sir,” I

was inclined to believe—though not even now without doubt on the point—that the inventor's style of addressing Her Majesty was natural rather than assumed. In 1854, on the occasion of his introduction, in order to exhibit and explain a former invention, Starlight, on his approach, saluted Her Majesty with—

“How d'ye do, madam?”

This, as may be imagined, produced some little merriment on the part of everybody but the inventor, who not only preserved his gravity to the last, but—as he subsequently declared—during his entire interview and discourse with the Queen, felt himself “as easy as an old shoe.”

Starlight who had recently appointed a “private secretary” to aid the prosecution of his present design, was not likely to do anything that might lessen the dignity of the appointment, or detract from his own—real or assumed—position. A display of poverty is about the worst exhibition that can be made by one who has to deal with “great men,” and who expects his dealings to be attended with success. Expecting to have his own exchequer bountifully supplied from that of the English government, Starlight intended, by a few outward signs and flourishes, to intimate to certain gentlemen that something more than a “beggarly sum” would be expected for the invention of a man whose faith in the value of his

offspring enabled him to keep his carriage and private secretary before even his scientific prize had been converted. Starlight had been told to attend, on a certain day, at the Admiralty, when the lords thereof would accompany him wheresoever he might be disposed to lead them. But nothing had been said about conveyances. Starlight concluded that Lords of the Admiralty were not in the habit of riding either in omnibuses or cabs—not even in “Hansom cabs.” How is this doubt about the mode of conveyance, and by whom conveyances are to be provided, to be solved. Starlight is the very man to solve such a question, and London is the most convenient place in the world for solving it. Whether for the mere display of personal vanity, or for the attainment of a higher object, London is the very place in which to play an assumed character by any one who has the necessary cash for the purpose. Anything and everything can be hired in London—from a carriage and four down to a donkey-cart. The appointed day for an eventful meeting has at length arrived. A row of private—hired—carriages, with horses as gaily caparisoned, and coachmen as brightly buttoned as any that ever waited on “gentry” without means, were now on their way to the great building in Whitehall, to which the brightest hopes of Starlight were for a time directed.

“Poor, simple-hearted Starlight!” to suppose that

Lords of the Admiralty or any other government officers would condescend to ride in carriages at the expense of anybody but the public, by whom they are so liberally supplied. A full compliment of carriages, with mounted postilions, that confronted us as we entered the Admiralty enclosure soon decided the question, by signifying that our own hired vehicles were not wanted. On having this intimation confirmed by porters *number one, two and three*, we at once sent *our own* carriages home empty.

So Starlight and his private secretary rode with Lords of the Admiralty, in right royal carriages, to the factory, near the Victoria Park. At that factory, the said lords appeared to be astonished as well as pleased with all they saw. But with that distinguished party there was one man who was more astonished and delighted than any of the others. That man was neither a lord nor a duke. He was the head man from Woolwich dockyard—superintendent of the particular department to which Starlight's invention applied. As a practical mechanic, he fully understood, therefore appreciated, experiments which turned everything upside down, by producing in a few hours that which, by the old system, occupied as many days. When their lordships had seen all, and thanked Starlight for what they had seen, they took their departure—not however before they had requested the professional officers appointed to test the practical character of the invention

to send in their report as soon as possible. On this report Starlight's hopes now rested, for it would at once—so the inventor in blissful ignorance supposed—decide whether his hopes were to be realized, or whether they were altogether illusory.

“Poor, simple-hearted” Starlight, as a certain critic said of “Mr. Foster.” He expected that in two or three days an “official despatch” or an “express messenger” would have summoned him to the Admiralty. But day after day, and week after week expired, and no “express” came. During this period of painful suspense all sorts of surmises and doubts arose in the mind of the inventor—the last of which suggested the question—

“May not the officers have neglected or forgotten to send in their report?”

This doubt was soon to be solved by the man with whom it originated.

“I’ll soon settle that question,” said Starlight.

So saying, he started for Woolwich, and, on his arrival, obtained an interview with the chief of the dockyard—a gentleman whom Starlight declared to be one of the most honest and unreserved of government officials. This officer had been so favorably impressed with the merits of Starlight’s invention, that he did not hesitate to give him a copy of the report that had been sent to the Admiralty—although such an act was altogether opposed to “official law,”

and might have subjected the law-breaker to a severe reprimand. But the document was, of course, accepted and regarded as "strictly confidential." The substance of it was to the effect that "the application of the invention to the purpose for which it had been invented would insure a saving, *in labor alone*, of about *four hundred per cent.*" A copy of this "report" in its private character was valueless—except that it opened Starlight's eyes to what would be its real value, under the official seal of the Admiralty. As the august body that formed that board had made no overtures for the purchase of the invention, a favorable report on the merits of such invention from the highest authority in the kingdom might prove of the greatest value to the inventor.

"To give you a certificate on the merits of your invention—when those merits have been recorded by their own officers—will, on the part of their lordships, be a simple act of justice. This they will not deny you," I said, "though they evidently have no intention to make any further move in the matter."

Starlight, in a polite note to the Duke of Somerset, requested to be furnished with a copy of the report of the officers who had been appointed by the Admiralty to examine his invention. Another long, tedious, and—to Starlight—most expensive delay took place, but no answer reached the patient inventor. But patience itself may be pricked into passion.

Starlight has a good deal of forbearance, but when that forbearance is trifled with—wo to the triflers! They had better either release or grant their victim his request, or themselves clear out of his way or leave the country. With justice on his side, he is not the man to be denied justice, if it can be obtained in the land. If it cannot be had in one part, he will try another, and another, and yet another, till the entire surface and subject have been exhausted. It is neither empty boast nor personal vanity that prompts me to declare that—till my acquaintance with Starlight—I never met with human being whose energy in the pursuit of an object exceeded my own. But by the hero of the present narrative my own untiring energy and steady-going perseverance have been fairly whipped into shadows. Talk of rising with the sun! Starlight has often taken breakfast, and made a call on his “private secretary” an hour or two before Sol had raised his head above his morning blanket or pillowy cloud. A stranger might reasonably suppose that the “kind folks” by whom Starlight is lodged would have no *treat* with such a lodger, except in the weekly receipt of the amount of their monetary demand on the same. But while this active genius is astonishing the world with his scientific wonders, his “better half” is charming the domestic circle with her poetic effusions. It is to be hoped that the lady’s modesty may not for ever place

so circumscribed a limit to the circulation of the original and elegant productions of her pen; but that she may some day be induced to give to the world what she has already given to a few favored friends. Her poems are her only children; and, like a fond mother, she seems disinclined to let her little ones wander from home.

Starlight having duly qualified himself on the best mode of obtaining access to "great men," now proceeded to the Admiralty—not only for the purpose of seeing the first lord thereof, but in order to ascertain why that nobleman had neither conceded a reasonable demand, nor acknowledged the polite letter in which the request had been conveyed. The Duke was "not at home," and the next "best man"—Lord Clarence Paget—having satisfied himself of the *determined* character of his visitor, informed Starlight that he would make enquiry on the subject of his visit and communicate with him on the morrow. The morrow came and, with it, the promised communication, by which Starlight was informed that "no application on the subject named by the inventor had been received by the Admiralty." Here then was the key to another discovery concerning the fate of certain letters which are ever and anon sent by anxious applicants to "great men." Every "great man" keeps his *private secretary*. Captain Moore was *private secretary* to the Duke of Somerset, and Captain Moore "knew nothing

about the letter” sent to the Duke by Starlight. All that Starlight knew, and all that the public will ever know, is that the letter was sent to, but not received by the Duke, although the Duke would have had the credit of having received the same, had not the writer “fished up” the opposite fact. Another application, which Starlight himself delivered to Lord Paget, elicited the reply that—“It is not usual for their lordships to furnish an inventor with a copy of a report on his invention.” On the receipt of this letter Starlight said *nothing*, but his looks denoted the tenor of what he would soon have to say. He made a *trio* of visits—the first on Sir Charles Wood, the second on Lord Paget; and the third on the Duke of Somerset. I venture to assert that these nobles—to the last day of their existence—will not have the impression created by that visit entirely erased from their memory. Had not the inventor abundant matter for making such impression? Though officers had been appointed to examine his invention, and though he had waited for many weeks—at an enormous expense—for the result of such examination, he was coolly informed that it was not usual to give an inventor any kind of satisfaction whatever, not even the self-satisfaction of learning, officially, whether his invention was considered “good” or “good for nothing.” But, as I before stated, Starlight—with justice on his side—is not a man whose spirit can be

easily extinguished, not even by lords or dukes. In less than a week a copy of the "favorable report" had been received from the Admiralty; and, on Starlight assuring the first lord that he had nothing more to ask—knowing, as he did, that there was nothing more of a substantial character to be obtained—that great naval power, whom Starlight had in so remarkable a manner brought within reach, graciously committed to paper, for the benefit of the inventor, his own high opinion of "the great invention." Here is the latter part of the Duke's letter, in his own hand-writing:—

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Sir

The report of
the professional officers who
accompanied the Board of

Admiralty on that occasion
 was also in favor of
 your invention.

I have the honor to be
 Sir
 Your Obedt Servt.

Somerset.

I also append a *fac-simile* of the autograph of Sir Charles Wood—without the use of whose name Starlight might possibly have waited, and waited in vain, to see the First Lord of the Admiralty.

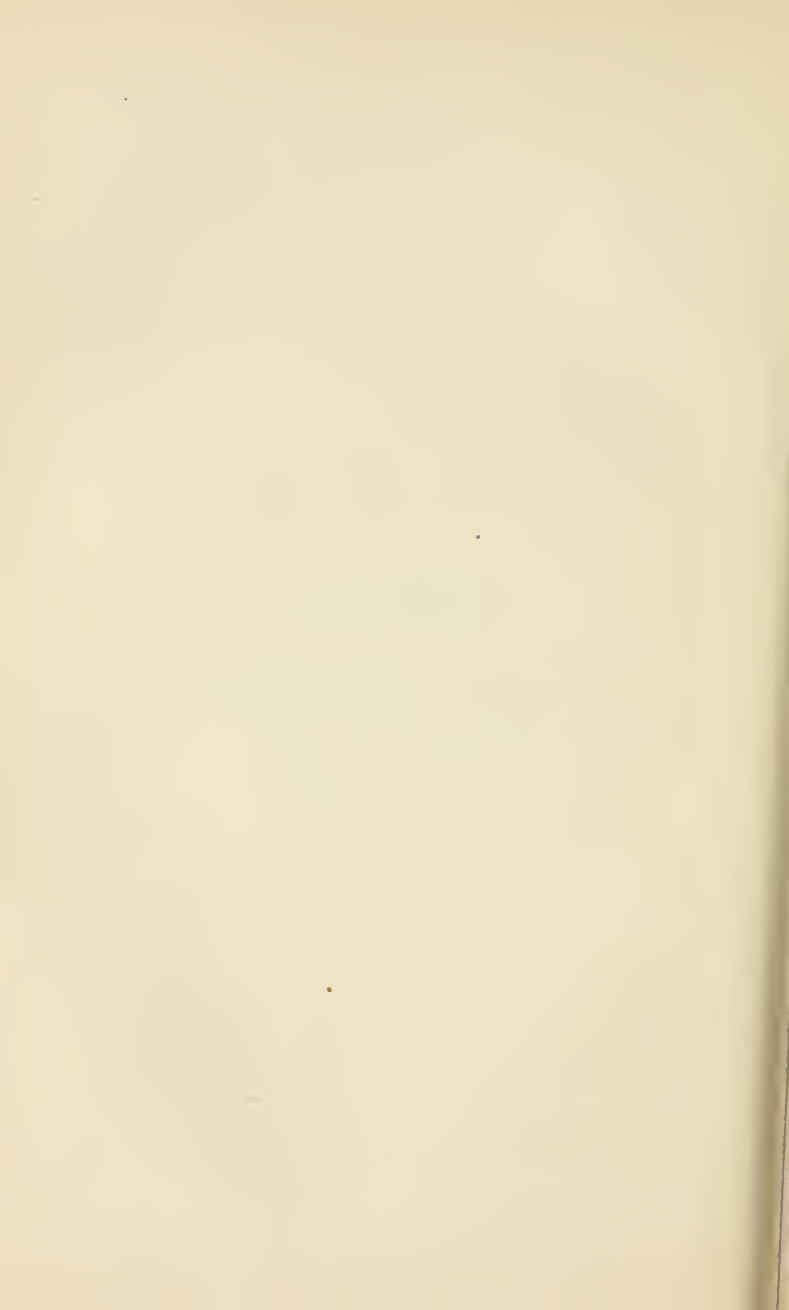
Ans to
 Chron

So much for the Lords of the Admiralty, in their dealings with an inventor ! The reader may naturally expect that the pen by which such an entire *want of system* has been exposed, will now condemn those unbusiness-like and unfeeling lords for a total want of regard to the interests of the public—in not having purchased, or even made overtures for the purchase of an invention on which they placed so high a value. But in doing justice, or in trying to do justice, to my friend, Starlight—in recording the trials and troubles, the energy and tact of one of the most extraordinary men of the day, I must at the same time endeavour to do justice to others. The love of *truth* will not allow me to disfigure these pages with its opposite—not even to serve a friend. In my own humble opinion, the Lords of the Admiralty acted with a due regard to the public interests, by *not* purchasing the invention of Starlight. They saw that they would derive the benefit of manufacture by such invention, without going to the vast expense the erection of machinery in each of our dockyards would have involved ; and I think they acted wisely in not incurring such expense. In the disposal of the public funds, our “great men” in this country may often err in judgment ; but I am disposed to think that, in such matters, errors in judgment may be regarded as their greatest sins. Not so, however, in minor matters of business—the machinery for working which, or the

way in which such machinery is worked, is a positive disgrace to a great nation. No commercial house in the kingdom could possibly stand for twelve months, if the proprietors were to conduct business after the fashion adopted by our "Lords of the Admiralty." Though exactitude in every point is not guaranteed in the record of what took place two years ago, my sketch of the difficulties experienced by those who have business in Whitehall is in the main correct—if not, it is underdrawn rather than exaggerated.

Chapter vi.

A SHOAL OF SHARKS.



“SHARK!” This cry is by no means an unfamiliar one to voyagers in tropical or semi-tropical climates. I have often heard it, and have often seen, if not aided, the capture of the great and voracious sea-animal, to which the exciting shout of “shark!” ever summons a host of anxious pursuers—or, more correctly speaking, a band of enticers or sturdy fishermen, who tempt the sea-glutton to his *last* bait. Of his fate, when captured, the reader will hardly require to be informed, as everybody may be sure that the first thing the captors do with the monster is, “to cut him up.” Had I only “talent” for the task—this is the operation I would gladly perform on those “land sharks,” to which I am now about to direct attention—not to cut up their bodies with knife or hatchet, but to cut up their vile occupation by the force of an earnest, but humble pen.

In many respects, the habits of land sharks bear a striking resemblance to those of their ocean relatives. With regard to the latter—no sooner is any luxury or dainty dish “afloat,” such as the body of a new-born babe, or a sucking pig, than the wily inhabitant of the deep appears in the immediate vicinity of the feast, as if by magic. His sudden and mysterious

appearance where, during the previous moment, his presence was not expected, has ever been, and is ever likely to be, something like a riddle with poor "Jack Tar." Human wolves occasion similar surprises. Their scent is something truly marvellous. It is said that aborigines can trace or track a kangaroo at a distance of several miles. But there is no limit to the distance at which land sharks can trace or track an inventor.

In order clearly to comprehend the various accomplished and strategic movements of these inventor-hunters, the reader must know that they are by no means of that common, or plebeian class of animals that walk our streets, attend our race-courses, go to our betting and billiard rooms, and proceed to dirty lanes and crowded corners, in pursuit of *small game*. Though the monsters now under notice may, by way of pastime, dabble a little in these things, and pick up an occasional mouthful in such places, they are themselves of a superior breed to common or illiterate minds. They aim at higher objects than "flat fish," though, like Justice Greedy, who swallowed a barrel of oysters as a relish to breakfast, they may take in a few of the like trifles on their *daily course*. Sharks that follow and feed on inventors are of good, sometimes of high, descent. They have a large circle of what we commonly hear called "respectable connexions." Though—since the discovery of their man-hunting and kindred propensities—they may be

shunned even by members of their own family, they nevertheless manage to retain a hold on many persons of position, who still notice them for their family's sake. The glitter of the gold made by their profession, will often hide from friendly eyes the dark character of the profession itself; and, in *the way of the world*, many (so called) respectable men are ready to partake of the luxuries of a feast, without caring to enquire either about the real character of their host, or the means by which his daily and intoxicating dainties are furnished.

No sooner did paragraphs appear in the newspapers, stating that the Lords of the Admiralty had visited Starlight's temporary factory, and examined "a new and wonderful invention," than Starlight was beset by land sharks of the most insinuating and seductive character. They "dodged" the inventor at all times and in all places. And the refinement of their manner, the ingenious and *seemingly disinterested* way in which they proffered aid to an intended victim, and the great interest they seemed to take, or professed to feel, for the advancement of the arts and sciences, and for the progress of anything and everything by which their country and countrymen might be benefited,—these are some of the dangers by which "poor, simple-hearted" inventors are surrounded, and they are also the snares by which too many *trusting* inventors are entrapped.

A rough sketch of one or two of these worthies, may give the reader some idea, if only a faint one, of the "sayings and doings" of the entire crew. Here is the very opposite of what young ladies would call, "a duck," in the person of—

BACHELOR DRAKE.

Bachelor Drake, as his name denotes, has never been married. For the sake of the opposite sex, it is to be hoped that he may die a bachelor, unless time should previously change the entire nature of the animal. In chambers, not far from Regent Street, are the private quarters of Bachelor Drake. The only proof that there is any existing tie between himself and his father, lies in the nicely furnished chambers of the son, which are kept up and provisioned partly by an annual allowance from an indulgent, but *distant* parent, and partly by the bachelor's own "pickings" from public companies, public "dodges," poor inventors, and various other channels to which further allusion is unnecessary. Bachelor Drake boasts of his "regular hours." He takes breakfast at eleven, lunch at two, dinner at six, and retires to rest at two in the morning. As personal friends, the bachelor can boast of a couple of needy M.P.'s, two or three fast "gentlemen of the press," a few half-pay officers, more than a few officers *without* pay, and certain sporting civilians, whose affectionate, if

not passionate regard for their friend, is clearly demonstrated by the simple, yet striking fact, that a well charged "wine cooler and box of cigars" are at all hours—both of day and night—prominent features in Bachelor Drake's chambers. Bachelor Drake has what ladies would call "a plain face." But, in other respects, the Bachelor has taken from the school of *art* materials to supply the deficiencies of nature. Though unable to re-cast an unintellectual cranium in the mould of genius, or to grace a sullen or sinister countenance with the sweet and natural smile of love, candour, and benevolence, the "make up" of other parts of his body not only display evidence of "the man of taste," but—so far as outward signs can justify the belief—tend to prove that Bachelor Drake might have been raised to the character of "a gentleman," had he not lowered himself to that of "a shark."

Of the exact manner in which Bachelor Drake first discovered Starlight I am not quite sure. No doubt the newspaper paragraphs concerning the Lords of the Admiralty and "a wonderful invention" put the shark on his present scent. The substance of the first interview may be gathered from what follows—

"Good morning, sir!" said Drake, accosting Starlight on his way down Pall Mall. "My friend, the member for ——, tells me you are the inventor of a

new system for —— which seems destined not only to astonish, but to benefit the world at large.”

“I am the inventor of the system you mention,” said Starlight; “and I shall be most happy not only to astonish and benefit the world, but myself also.”

“That you will succeed in doing this, or that others will do it for you, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. Were I in your place, I should consider my fortune already made.”

“I’d like to see it first,” said Starlight.

“You, perhaps, know Mr. Buchanan, the late president of the United States?”

“Quite well,” said Starlight. “I have a letter from that gentleman now in my pocket.”

“Indeed! He is an intimate friend of mine.”

“Have you been in America?” enquired Starlight.

“Several times,” replied Drake.

This was the key note to a friendly relationship between the speakers, as Starlight has not only a partiality for his own country, but likewise for any body who has *been* there.

“Am pleased to shake hands with you, sir,” said Starlight.

“My chambers are close by,” was the reply. “I shall be happy to have a little conversation with you.”

“Most happy,” said Starlight, as he turned in the direction indicated by the Bachelor, and forthwith proceeded with him to his apartments.

The *man servant* by whom Drake and Starlight were admitted to the chambers of the former—the respectable appearance of the interior of those chambers, together with the friendly manner of the tenant, had already favorably impressed Starlight with the high character and position of his new acquaintance—an acquaintance who was gradually feeling his way to the “business” he had in view.

“I presume, sir, you intend to dispose of your invention to the English government?” enquired Drake.

“Decidedly,” said Starlight, “if my ability as a salesman only equalled my inclination to sell.”

“What steps have you taken in the matter?”

“The Lords of the Admiralty have seen and approved my invention, and have given me a certificate to that effect.”

“But made no overture for the purchase of the same?”

“No,” said Starlight.

“Of course not. You don’t know their lordships as well as I do. You say they have seen and approved your invention? That’s a step in the right direction; but they’ll make no further move in the matter without the application of that resistless power, by the aid of which you can alone accomplish your object. You are no doubt familiar with the name of this mighty power?”

"Not that I am aware of," said Starlight. "What is it?"

"External pressure!" was the reply. "You can do nothing without it."

"How is it to be obtained, and by whom is it to be applied?" enquired Starlight.

"Coming, as it does, from an American, that question does not surprise me," said the Bachelor, with a laugh. "You know nothing of the round-about way we Englishmen have to take to effect an object—especially when the prize is to be won or wrested from government. I shall be happy to introduce you to my friend, the member for ——, who will tell you all about it. In the meantime, permit me to enquire whether you have consulted any one else concerning the realization of this wonderful invention of yours?"

"I have merely had some conversation with that eminent commander, Captain Vine, to whom I was introduced by my private secretary, Mr. Foster."

"Your private secretary is all very well. I have heard of his works; and he may be useful to you. You must bring him along with you, and dine with me some day—that is, if you deem my gratuitous advice of any service to you."

"I am, indeed, grateful for your great kindness," said Starlight. "Being a stranger in this country, and a still greater stranger in the matter to which

you refer, the advice of a friend will be most valuable."

"That advice I shall be happy to give you—knowing, as I well know, how often foreigners are *taken in*—especially inventors."

"Yes, sir," said Starlight; "and as I wish to avoid—"

"Exactly," said the Bachelor, interrupting him. "You just now mentioned the name of Captain Vine. That gentleman is all very well, as the commander of a ship; but he never sold an invention. If you take my advice you will steer clear of that quarter at present, although the Captain may answer a certain purpose by and bye. Is there any one else to whom you have mentioned the subject?"

"No one, except Captain Vine and the Lords of the Admiralty."

"Then for nearly six months you have had your hopes fixed on the Admiralty, and all for—*nothing*? Your expenses during that time must have been something considerable?"

"Yes, sir; they have been very heavy, and are likely to be so for some time to come, unless I can find a more ready market for my invention than I have found in the English Admiralty."

"Well; neither your valuable invention, nor its worthy parent, shall fail for want of a friend—you understand me? Can I serve you in any way beyond

that of giving advice? I know that a little temporary assistance to an inventor who has suffered unnecessary delay may sometimes prove of service?"

Sagacious and accomplished player! You have already touched the weak point of your intended victim, who, at this moment, has only a balance of twenty-five pounds at his bankers. Seeing that Starlight hesitated, the Bachelor repeated the question—

"You understand me, my friend?"

"Exactly," said Starlight; "but as I expect a remittance in a few days, I—"

"I beg you will accept my offer till your remittance comes to hand. A cheque is at once at your service, and I shall expect nothing but your acknowledgment for the accommodation."

"You are exceedingly kind," said Starlight; "and if you can conveniently spare about two hundred dollars for a week, I—"

"My dear sir," said Drake, interrupting him and proceeding in haste to his desk; "there is nothing—nothing I assure you that—that can afford me more—more pleasure than in doing—in doing a—a good turn for—for my—for the—for any one who like—like yourself, was born to—to serve—to benefit your—your country. There, my dear sir!" continued the Bachelor, who returned with a cheque which he presented to Starlight; "there is my cheque for one hundred pounds. Pray make use of me in this way

whenever you may have occasion ; and if you will call on me to-morrow at twelve, I will give you a few useful hints for the speedy realization of your most wonderful invention."

After a warm expression of thanks, followed by the usual parting salutation, Starlight took leave of his new acquaintance, and soon after made a call on his "private secretary," in whom he had already placed more confidence than was at all times agreeable to his *confidant*, and to whom—like a considerate husband—he was ever a more willing messenger with *good* than with *bad* news.

"Poor, simple-hearted Starlight!" Such methinks may be the exclamation of the reader, who on seeing what Starlight may *seem* to believe, and on hearing what Starlight may have to say, will probably consider him anything but "sharp." Pray pause in your judgment, gentle reader. Before you write down the character "a fool," follow and watch it to the end of the story. If Starlight be "a fool," many modern philosophers may take a lesson from his folly. *Seemingly* blind to the wily games or enticing snares of another, he often sees the intended move of a player long before it is made ; and while plucking from anything or anybody all the good he can discover, he generally avoids the dross. He hears every word that is said, but *weighs* every word *after* it has been said ; and he will, to all appearances, embrace a pro-

position to-day which he may entirely shun to-morrow. And he will himself often propose what, on reflection, he will himself dissolve.

"Now then, Foster," said Starlight, after he had given a full account of the interview, as related above, "what is your opinion of our new man?"

"What is *your* opinion of him, Starlight?"

"That's not the question, my friend. You are as bad as the Admiralty official, for you answer my question by asking another. I want *your* opinion of the man?"

"Well; at the first blush of the question, my opinion, though young, looks rather unhealthy."

"*Now* I understand you. But may not this Bachelor Drake find capitalists, independent of government, to purchase my invention?" anxiously enquired Starlight.

"Yes," I replied, "if, as you seem to imagine, his personal friends are of high character and position."

"At all events," continued Starlight, like an anxious general at a critical moment, "he may aid us in another way; and you know that my position will not be a desirable one, till I obtain assistance from the other side."

"I know that; but I don't know how you have managed to ease yourself of the sum of fifteen hundred pounds with which you started here a few months ago."

“That’s gone!” said Starlight, in that curt way in which he treats past events, whether relating to money or men that can serve him no longer. “Do you not think—I do—that that man may serve us in some way or other?” continued the inventor, in a manner that implied a doubt on his own supposition. “I think I had better see him in the morning?”

“By all means,” I replied. “But as the gentleman is a comparative stranger to you, I will simply say ‘*be careful.*’”

“A timely, but—in my case—an unnecessary warning, my friend. Good evening!”

On the following morning, after he had paid a visit to Bachelor Drake, Starlight again waited on his “private secretary.”

“There, Foster! I want you to examine that!” he said, as he threw on the table a roll of paper.

“What’s this?” I enquired.

“The draft of an agreement,” was the reply.

After I had carefully examined the paper, Starlight continued—

“Do you discover any danger there, my friend?”

“None—except the delay that may be hereby occasioned in the attainment of your object. I perceive you are to pay the gentleman a heavy commission in the event of his effecting a sale, but none in the event of failure.”

“Exactly !” said Starlight, in a tone that told of his satisfaction with regard to the treaty.

From the hour at which the agreement was signed to that which will presently be named, Starlight walked, rode, ran, or danced a daily attendance on Bachelor Drake ; and Bachelor Drake, like an “old stager,” or accomplished stage manager, kept up the walk, ride, run, or dance, till the very moment of the grand and final *tableau* ! Each scene proved more exciting than the last, while every act prepared the mind—especially the anxious mind of an inventor—for a triumphant demonstration that would take place in the last scene of all. Starlight’s “wonderful invention” was seen by Bachelor Drake and by Bachelor Drake’s friends ; and Bachelor Drake’s friends were each and all ready and willing to “empty their coffers to the last penny” in order to obtain so rich a prize. The hour for the “grand demonstration” at length arrived, and Starlight, by special appointment, waited on the manager, Bachelor Drake, at his private chambers.

“Well, my friend,” said the Bachelor, as he saluted Starlight, on his entrance, with a hearty shake of the hand ; “I am happy to congratulate you on a most pleasing prospect for the close of our labors.”

“Am glad, indeed, to hear you say so,” said Starlight, on taking a seat that had been placed for him in front of a “nice little lunch.”

“Yes ; there is now no doubt whatever that I shall shortly effect a sale to your entire satisfaction. I have already received your verbal assent to effect this sale, subject to your approval ; and in order that my friends, who are strangers to you, may know that I am so privileged, I have stated the fact on a little slip of paper.”

Hereupon the Bachelor placed a small portfolio, with the “little slip of paper,” before Starlight, as he sat at lunch, while the bearer held in his hand a pen duly charged with the inky fluid by which he intended that paper to become a legal document.

“Just put your signature to that, and the thing will be settled,” said Drake, as he handed the pen to Starlight. “By the bye,” continued the Bachelor, “I yesterday heard you say that before the sale of your invention is effected and ratified, you would like to discharge a few trifling liabilities. About what amount would be required for that purpose?”

“Probably about fifteen or sixteen hundred pounds,” said Starlight, as he examined the ‘*little bit of paper*’ that had been placed before him by his interrogator.

“Why not make it *two thousand* ? If that will be sufficient, I might as well write you a cheque for the amount ; should you require more, I shall be happy to introduce you to my bankers. But pray get on with your lunch, my friend. There is nothing in that paper that will in any way affect you. Just

attach your signature, and I will write you a copy of the document."

"Exactly!" said Starlight, still looking over the paper. "You may possibly think the custom a strange one—but in *our* country, it is usual to receive the copy of a document, before we are expected to sign the original."

"Very true; but this is quite unnecessary in a trifling matter like the present."

"Trifling!" exclaimed Starlight, in that artillery tone of voice, peculiar to his spirit when it has been suddenly fired. "Let me tell you, sir, it is no trifling matter that has occupied eighteen of the best years of a man's life. Shall I, without an hour's consideration, sign a document affecting an invention that has cost me so much time and money?"

"You do not suppose I would ask you to sign anything that would redound either to *your* disadvantage or *my* dishonor?"

"I do not suppose either *this* or *that*," said Starlight.

"You are one of the most singular men that was ever by an Englishman encountered," said Drake, as he took his seat at table.

"Others have made that discovery before you, my friend. I am now acquainted with the leading features of your '*little slip of paper*,' and will see, or send to you on the subject, to-morrow morning. Your very good health, sir!"

This was given in that friendly and good-natured style that—to the astonished vision of Bachelor Drake—supplied another touch of singularity to the “singular character” that was not to be “caught,”—not even by the tempting bait put forth in the proffered cheque for a “couple of thousand.” Had a stranger entered the room at this moment, he might have supposed that the pair before him were applying a little social cement to strengthen friendship, rather than a parting salute to a *final farewell!*

“There, Foster!” said Starlight, on his unexpected rush into the sitting-room of his “private secretary,” soon after he had left the bachelor,—“there, my friend,” he continued, as he threw on the table a bank note for *one hundred pounds*; “before twelve to-morrow, take the note to that man, Blake, and get a receipt for it. Should five, or even ten pounds be charged for its use, pay it. I have an engagement elsewhere. Good night!”

Such—at the moment alluded to—is a faithful picture of Starlight, and such the sum total of the communication by which I was left to surmise—correctly or incorrectly—a whole budget of “disagreeables.” That a sudden estrangement had taken place, where it was not expected, was made manifest, by the change which, in a few hours, had converted the familiar term of “My friend, the bachelor,” into

“that man, Drake.” The new title was in itself a significant one from the mouth of Starlight, who, not only never defiled his tongue with an oath, but never made use even of an unkind or harsh expression. Of whom he had, at so short a notice, obtained the bank note, by which Drake was to be repaid, I am now, as I ever have been, at a loss to know. It was certainly not drawn from his own bankers, and certainly not from the expected remittance that had not yet come to hand. Room for a vague inference on the subject, may possibly be found in some future incident, by which the extraordinary “productive powers” of Starlight may be brought a little nearer to the break of day.

It was during an evening’s rest—a rare event with Starlight—that I became familiar with the interview named above; and with the substance of that “little slip of paper” on which Starlight was requested to sign the power over the future management and sale of his invention from his own hands to those of Bachelor Drake.

Without, at present, devoting more space to other members of the shark fraternity—some of whom may be incidentally mentioned hereafter—it is necessary to observe, that the individual in the foregoing sketch is a *gentleman*, in comparison with many by whom Starlight was surrounded. Bachelor Drake holds a higher position than most of them. To that

position may be ascribed, not only greater danger in the wake of an intended victim, but likewise the absence of a peculiar feature by which his brother sharks were distinguished. Though every shark, of the class to which allusion is here made, keeps his "banking account," very few of the body have more than a little money—the majority *none at all*—at their bankers. Bachelor Drake, however, was, in this respect, an exception, although it was, no doubt, a mere "figure of speech" that represented a balance of two thousand pounds, when, as a tempting bait for Starlight's signature to the "*little slip of paper*," he spoke of writing a cheque for that amount. Had the paper been signed, the probability is, that the cheque would have remained, as it did remain, unsigned; or had the cheque been signed, it would, doubtless, have been honored by excuses instead of bank notes. Nevertheless, the bachelor had a little money—hence the absence of the particular feature alluded to. That mark of distinction is simply this, that other sharks—one and all—required "a few hundred pounds paid down" before they could open negotiations, either with the English or foreign powers, for the sale of Starlight's valuable patents. While each and all were certain of effecting a speedy sale, it could only be done under the condition just named. Like the inventor himself, when he marched his line of carriages to the Admiralty, these would-be agents

declared it was necessary to open the ceremony with “great men” in a style not only in keeping with the dignity of those on whom they had to call, but also worthy of the magnitude of the subject they had to submit for consideration. But, as a rule, Starlight makes payments *only* for “*value received*.” Though the “sliding scale” was adopted by some hungry shark, who would gradually drop from “five hundred” down even to the paltry sum of “fifty pounds” for his “valuable services,” Starlight declined to pay any body a dollar for something he had not received.

A detailed account of the various “dodges” of these sharks would read much more like fiction than fact. To any one unacquainted with the subject it would appear incredible that in the heart of London there should be so many *gentlemen*—persons regarded by strangers, and even by friends who are strangers to their practices, as “highly respectable” men—who are constantly on the watch for, and absolutely feed on their fellows just in the same way that one fish feeds on another. If the various forms of crime—not regarded as crime, nor legislated for as such—could only, with other offences, be classified, the doings of the shark fraternity would, in my humble opinion, be marked of a very dark character, and merit a greater degree of punishment than is awarded to the poor wretch who openly, and in broad daylight, picks the pocket of some more *respectable* but equally

guilty brother. The one goes boldly to his work, while the other employs every imaginable kind of deception and falsehood. One of the *gentlemen* who came to Starlight—a fellow backed by high recommendation, too!—assured him that he would bring two men of position and capital to see his invention, and if what they saw satisfied them, they would at once furnish, through themselves and others, the necessary amount for the purchase of the whole affair. They came, avowed their satisfaction, and forthwith conducted the inventor to a dark office at the east end of London, where another “*little slip of paper*” was presented for him to sign away his existence. It was subsequently discovered that one of these “capitalists” was nothing more nor less than a “black-leg” without a shilling; and that for more than six months he had been indebted to Captain—— in the sum of ten pounds—a loan for the repayment of which many unsuccessful applications had been made. Yet the man by whom this “great capitalist” was introduced was respectably connected. On his boasting on one occasion that he could “readily dispose of the French patent, as he was connected with the person *next* to the Emperor,” a friend of the inventor facetiously enquired, “Are you really?—because the person *next* to the Emperor must be the Empress.”

Whatever treatment Starlight subsequently expe-

rienced at the hands of *other gentlemen*—a faithful record of which will appear as this story proceeds—he is quite convinced that, though his “wonderful invention” might have benefited others, the inventor would have derived no benefit from the success of his scientific offspring—had it been left to the tender mercies of any member of the *shark* fraternity.

Chapter vii.

LIFE OF GEORGE THE FIFTH—A CITY
GRANDEE—UNAUTHORIZED EDITION.

OF what use to its owner, or to any body else, is a bank note that cannot be converted? Starlight is both inventor and owner of a great invention. At present that invention is attended with consequences of a much more serious character than would attach to an unconvertible note. The scientific instrument is not only expensive to keep, but—in motion—even to look at. It is symbolic of the horse that is “eating his head off.” It requires two-thirds of a *convertible ten pound note* to exercise the joints of the costly machine, even for the gratification of a single visitor. “Getting up steam” for an exposition of only two hours’ duration is a most expensive operation. Yet it is one that must be continued, and continued for a considerable time, if invention and inventor are to succeed. So soon as Starlight had shaken off the sharks by whom he was surrounded—men who intended to convert the prize for *their own* benefit—there arose the question, “How, and by whom, can my invention be turned into cash?” Starlight was now satisfied that the only market for anything of national utility is the nation at large. But how is the nation at large to see or become acquainted with the merits of the present invention?—in one way only, viz:—

through the opinions of eminent scientific and commercial men, backed by a free and independent press. It is fairly assumed that these two points would prove powerful aids, if not certain passports to success ; that if the whole world should pronounce a verdict in favor of the scientific offspring, somebody in that world—if not some of the witnesses, or jury themselves—would surely adopt so promising a child ! “ The people and press ! ” This was now the inventor’s cry. Could that banner be unfurled, as a signal of triumph, rather than—as at present—a desire for such a victory, Starlight would be satisfied that—in a golden sense—he might afford to hang the Admiralty and all its officials. The high opinion of the great naval board might be of some service, if the public only entertained a high opinion of the board itself. So, with perfect confidence in the great value of what he has to offer, the inventor bids farewell to the inanimate, apathetic, slow and sleepy stars of ribbon and red tape for the great sovereign power of a great nation—“ The people and press ! ”

But *here*, as with difficulties in other walks of life, one question leads to another, and another, and, perhaps many others. The present discovery of the real key to success reveals at the same time the want of an indispensable power for its application. The second question of—“ By whose hand can the people be led to a great scientific exposition ? ” falls into

comparative insignificance by side of the more important query of—"Whose pocket is to supply means for leading the people hither?" A series of demonstrations on a gigantic scale would involve an outlay of a considerable sum of money—by whom is the money to be supplied? With less than ten pounds at his banker's, Starlight seemed a most unlikely man to furnish a satisfactory solution to such a problem. But if Starlight is a fair specimen of a real inventor, and a real inventor is a fair specimen of a real American, real Americans are, beyond doubt, a most remarkable race of men.

"Friend Foster!" said Starlight.

"Well, Starlight," said I.

"If *I* can find money to exhibit my invention to the celebrities of the kingdom, can *you* bring the *right sort* of men to the exhibition?"

"I'll try," was the answer.

Starlight at once started on a seemingly hopeless errand, while I took immediate steps for the prosecution of a task that appeared to be somewhat less difficult to accomplish, though by no means an easy one. My first visit to the first man selected, or grandee *number one*, is probably the only call entitled to a detailed account. Of other great men that were conducted to the factory, the signature of each will at once indicate the position of the visitor and the value of his visit. Now, then, for a few words concerning—

THE MERCHANT PRINCE, AFTERWARDS GEORGE THE FIFTH.

My friend, George —, and I were pupils in the same commercial school—not companions in the same warehouse, but in one and the same branch of commerce—though it was only at a recent period we became personally acquainted, or aware that we had so long journeyed on the same commercial path. We were subsequently brother “bagmen” on the “road,” each driving a handsome “turn-out,” and each representing a large and important wholesale establishment. But here a divergence took place in our onward course. George followed and persevered on the path he had selected from choice, while I abandoned what, at an early age, I had embraced through necessity. Though the trade now relinquished is that which a certain worldly-minded critic—who measures happiness by a golden vessel—tells me I should have “stuck to,” I do not regret the change by which I became, and still remain, a comparatively *poor man*. And while heartily applauding the assiduity by which my brother traveller has raised himself to the position of a “merchant prince,” I do not for one moment either envy or desire the prince’s lofty station.

The house of which George — is one of the leading partners is the largest of its class, or probably of any other class, in the world—the monster parent establishment having, together, no fewer than twenty wholesale branches in various parts of the United Kingdom and on the Continent.

George —— is now a great man, probably one of the greatest men in the City of London. George —— is also a rich man, probably a millionaire. Not only is George a great man and a rich man, but he lives in a style that supplies ample evidence both of his greatness and his riches. His town mansion would be worthy a prince of the realm, while his country estates might be envied by a lord of the manor. Thus surrounded by artistic splendour—nature smiling on him from without and art from within—with all the delicacies, either in season or out of season, at his command, George —— “fares sumptuously every day.” Nor does he fare alone. He teaches his pupils and those that fare with him how they may themselves fare, should they, like their host and tutor, ever grow rich in this world’s goods. Never had school-master less difficulty in finding scholars. George —— likes to be surrounded and patted on the back by a goodly company of notable men; and a goodly company is ever ready to obey the friendly call and attend the social gathering. Though, like other bygone monarchs, George —— cannot himself flavor the repast or impart a tone to the relish of his guests by an intellectual dish from the “head” of the table, the feast, in every other *sense*, is substantial, sumptuous, and complete. In addition to his hospitable disposition towards bishops and barons, George —— has the repute of being

“a good and charitable man;” and I may venture to say that every friend or subject of the monarch *knows* the name of each particular charity of which His Majesty is patron, while no acquaintance ever failed to receive *from somebody* a tract or newspaper that might happen to contain an account of any service rendered, any prizes distributed, or any speech made by the right royal gentleman. Therefore, with your permission, gentle reader, I will from this point of the present brief notice, address George —— as “George the Fifth.”

Although a man who has raised himself from an obscure to an eminent position can hardly be commended for turning his back on old and faithful friends, he is, in my humble opinion, perfectly justified in *weeding* former associates, in order to court the society of those more in keeping with his newly acquired means and station. In his early career, His Majesty, George the Fifth, had no doubt a large number of acquaintances—some of whom were conveniently, if not wisely, forgotten after he had entered on his princely estate. Of those that were, or those that were not, honored by “court favors” I am unable to speak, as I was not personally acquainted with George the Fifth till he ascended the throne. At present let me simply observe that His Majesty graciously smiled *on me*; yet I shall presently deem it my duty still further to observe—though the reve-

lation may not, in the highest sense of the word, *honor* the recorder—*why* His Majesty smiled *on me*.

I was now about to do what I had never before even dreamt of doing—to ask a favor of my friend the “merchant prince.” The reader may not regard as a boon of any great price that denoted by a polite request conveyed from one friend to another, between whom are at least existing signs if not real links of friendship—especially when the extent of such request is to devote a couple of hours to the inspection of a great modern invention. It may be supposed that the invitation could hardly be declined, when royal favors—as will be seen by what follows—were showered on the applicant, even before his petition could be laid before the commercial “grandee.”

“How d’ye do, my friend?—very glad to see you,” said His Majesty, as I entered his private council chamber.

“And I doubt not you would have been equally pleased to see an eminent American whom I had intended to introduce.”

“Pleased to see *any* friend of yours,” replied His Majesty. “Is the gentleman an American merchant? We have extensive connexions in all parts of America.”

Evading the question, so far as a *direct* answer was concerned, I placed before His Majesty a gold snuff-box, richly studded with brilliants.

“That box—as may be seen by the inscription—was presented to the gentleman by the Emperor Napoleon. My friend has also had the honor of an introduction to Her Majesty.”

“Indeed!” exclaimed George the Fifth, in seeming surprise.

“The member for —— has called by appointment,” said a servant, who at this moment opened the door.

“Do not allow me to stand in the way of an engagement,” I remarked, as I took up my hat and Starlight’s box.

“That’s very considerate of you, Foster. Will you dine with me on Wednesday next?”

“I shall be most happy,” was the reply.

“Then I shall expect you at seven o’clock. Bring your American friend with you.”

The member for —— now made his appearance, and I hastened my departure. Just as I was leaving the chamber, His Majesty crossed to the door and whispered—

“Foster, put that box in your pocket on Wednesday, and bring it with you. Good day, my friend.”

A single line will tell the reader what the reader will, no doubt, assume, before he reads that “both Starlight and his private secretary decided on dining with His Majesty George the Fifth.” That dinner would be a suitable preface to the subsequent opening of the diner’s wish. After that dinner, His Majesty

could hardly refuse to honor with his presence a guest who had a subject of national importance for review. Though his opinion, in a scientific point of view, would be of little worth, yet, in a commercial aspect, his testimony might prove of considerable value. George the Fifth was a successful and well-known merchant; and—with the public—the opinion of a city “grandee” is often worth half a dozen opinions from a corresponding number of aristocratic loungers. I had promised Starlight to devote my best energies in a daily endeavour to conduct to his factory some of the most eminent scientific men, as well as a few of the greatest commercial celebrities in the kingdom. Having previously, and on several occasions, dined with George the Fifth, and having also met at court notable men from various professions—men whose scent for a sumptuous feast is as strong as that of a shark when in pursuit of an inventor—could I do better than lead Starlight to a right royal table?—with a view not so much to the enjoyment of the luxuries thereon, as to the personal acquaintance of the noble host. This early foreshadowing of the opening of a new drama or farce, as the case may be, had already inspired Starlight with a buoyant hope, if not impressed him with a firm belief—even before the rise of the curtain on the opening scene—that herein was an auspicious omen of future success.

The day and the dinner hour at length arrived,

and the invited guests were already assembling to partake of a few of the luxuries of one who "fared sumptuously every day," and to be still further honored at a

DINNER AT THE PALACE OF HIS MAJESTY GEORGE
THE FIFTH.

The town mansion and gardens of the monarch were in every way worthy of a "merchant prince." A noble marble hall, that led to magnificently furnished apartments, at once conveyed to the mind of a stranger an idea, if only a faint one, of the wealth derived and derivable from the commerce of the greatest and richest nation in the world. A four-wheeled cab and a "Hansom"—the only two *public* conveyances by which the carriage-ride of the palace was on this occasion honored—discharged their contents, Frank Foster and friend, a few moments before the appointed hour. Meeting Starlight on the steps leading to the hall, I was almost stupified with amazement at the sight presented in the appearance of this remarkable man, whose features were the only bright things about him. My surprise found vent in the exclamation of—

"Starlight! Starlight!"

"What's the matter?" enquired Starlight.

"What's the matter!" I repeated. "Is that a style for a full-dress dinner party?—frock coat, fancy waistcoat, and dirty boots!"

“What about it?” coolly enquired the inventor.

“What about it?—why, there’s nothing like ‘*dress*’ about it. Do you call yourself dressed for dinner?”

“Indeed I do, and am ready to prove it, if the dinner is only as well dressed.”

At this moment other guests arrived, the hall door was opened, we entered, our names were announced, His Majesty received us at the door of the reception room, accorded to each a hearty welcome, especially to Starlight, whom he immediately introduced to several of his guests as “a friend and eminent inventor from America.”

Among the party by whom His Majesty was on this occasion surrounded may be named one M.P.; two doctors of divinity; one ditto of medicine; a leash of barristers; a brace of artists; one merchant; a talented official from the Board of Trade; and Starlight and his “private secretary.”

A dinner party without ladies is like midsummer without the sun, while the unenlivened guests are like vases without flowers. You may fill the vessels with water, with wine, or with anything else you please, yet in the absence of nature’s bright, beautiful, and fragrant charms, their noble supporters become isolated, selfish, or inanimate rows of figured clay. At previous meetings—some years ago—when I had dined with His Majesty, the “court dinner” was graced by the presence of certain members of the fair sex, the

absence of whom, on the present occasion, provoked a striking and anything but an agreeable contrast.

Concerning the dinner, it will only be necessary to observe that it was such a repast—consisting of six or seven courses—as any one would naturally look for at a right royal table. Without describing, in detail, either the feast or the liveried attendants thereat; and without attempting a *verbatim* report of the sayings and doings of the assembled guests, or saying *for them* what they never said at all, I will briefly refer to two little incidents connected with the affair. Previous to entering the dining-room, George the Fifth privately intimated a desire to be entrusted with the box with which the Emperor Napoleon had honored Starlight. This I delivered to His Majesty, who secretly conveyed the same to his own pocket. So soon as the cloth had been removed from the dinner table, His Majesty introduced the magnificent gift that had been presented by a royal brother to an eminent inventor—at the same time informing his guests that the distinguished recipient, whom he was proud to call “his friend,” was at that moment his guest at the table before which they were seated. His Majesty also told them that “his friend” had • been introduced to Queen Victoria, and had received presents from nearly all the crowned heads of Europe. Hereupon Starlight became the “lion” of the party, till the lionization was transferred to a subject—

neither mortal nor immortal—to which I shall presently refer, and which lasted to the close of a long and anything but instructive sitting. Of the first and probably only little incident that gave rise to a *genuine* and general round of laughter Starlight was himself the founder. Among the numerous centre and side pieces on which a choice dessert rested, and to which a royal guest or guests were ever and anon tempted, there was *one* dish that seemed to be somewhat less attractive than other dishes—this was a dish of *French olives*. There were certainly two or three of the visitors who *appeared* to be enjoying them; and *their* praises induced Starlight to taste for himself. But the first was no sooner in his mouth than out of it. His Majesty, on observing this, enquired whether there was anything the matter? “No,” was the reply; “it is merely a bad one.” This remark from Starlight who had never tasted olives till now, occasioned considerable laughter, nor was the merriment of the party in any way lessened when, on Starlight being persuaded to “try another,” he pronounced them “all bad together.”

It is hardly possible for one man to become the guest of another, even for a few hours, and to enter into free and unreserved conversation with his entertainer, without discovering a key to the peculiar habits, tastes or tendencies of the mind of the host. There is almost sure to ooze out of that vent-hole,

of which the tongue is the pin, some little sign of the material within—something to indicate the kind of ingredients of which that material is cōposed. Is the gentleman a sportsman?—and who is there that is not a sportsman, whether his sport lies in deer-stalking or merely in popping at folly as it flies?—then, the conversation during a “protracted course at table” is almost certain to turn up the particular kind of game to which the mind of the host or head sportsman inclines. George the Fifth had been for many years “on the road.” At the social board or sign post that divides a “bagman’s” stages there is no subject that is more frequently discussed by a commercial man than the subject then and there *in hand*—WINE! An old traveller knows, or professes to know, good or bad wine before he puts it to his lips. Not only does he *scent* the choice article, as though it were a rose; not only does he know every house on the road where such “nosegays” are obtainable, but he will tell you the number of each bin or bed on which they rest, and the particular vintage of each juicy store; while he further declares that the bottle and cork of his favorite establishments are as familiar to him as are the faces of William the waiter, Tom the boots, and Sarah the chambermaid.

His Majesty George the Fifth boasted of “his splendid cellar of wine!” Since his ascension to his commercial throne, he had made himself master of

that which, while on the road, he beheld merely in the distance. He now enjoyed at his own table the “delicious beverage” that he formerly, and then only occasionally, obtained elsewhere. The reader will therefore not be surprised to learn that the second subject of conversation at the royal dinner table embraced the various vintages of various countries, from the time of George the First down to that of his present Majesty George the Fifth. So soon as a royal extinguisher had doomed Starlight’s “wonderful invention” to temporary darkness, wine! wine! wine! was the order of the day, or rather the order of *the night!* Yes; four precious hours were devoted to the consumption of the “choice drink”—bottle after bottle being opened, tasted, and commented on during the whole of that period. Let me, however, observe that it was not the vulgar taste of bygone days, but the refined taste of modern times, that was on this occasion indulged in. It was not the *quantity* but *quality* a man should drink that now formed a theme both for conversation and performance. Though the guests tasted and talked about a good many sorts of “wine,” they did not—as was the habit heretofore—get “tipsy” on any sort. The only thing that varied the conversation, without changing the subject of discourse, was the introduction of the familiar names of two distinguished absentees. His Majesty availed himself of an opportunity for informing the company

that "his friend, Charles Dickens, was an excellent judge of wine, and that he was also a very clever fellow, for on one occasion he spoke for more than a quarter of an hour entirely about the host (George the Fifth), and told the company many things about the host that the host himself didn't know before." His Majesty also referred to a choice wine that had been liberally patronised on the preceding evening at the house of "his friend," Baron Rich, one of the members for the great City of Riches. On this occasion George the Fifth and about thirty more "city grandees" of lesser magnitude, who had aided the Baron's return to Parliament, honored the wealthy M.P. with their presence at dinner. The Baron evidently knew his men. If their suffrages were not to be purchased with good old guineas, their "liberal principles" might at least receive a temporary warmth from the invigorating effects of "good old wine." So that after the company had tasted, if not drunk, enough, the Baron introduced "a clencher"—here are the very words of George the Fifth :—

"The Baron introduced a clencher for the final impression. And, my word! it was a choice article, my friends, I assure you; never tasted such wine in all my life. And strange to say, it occasioned one of the most striking repetition of figures I ever remember. This claret of the Baron's happened to be just thirty years old; it cost just thirty shillings a bottle;

just thirty of us sat at table; and we polished off just thirty bottles, as a seal to one of the best dinners that was ever enclosed in a human frame."

Well. It was nearly twelve o'clock when Starlight and his "private secretary" left the palace of His Majesty George the Fifth.

"Friend Foster," said Starlight, as we proceeded on our homeward course, there are two little questions I wish you to answer—if *you can*. We have spent five hours at a dinner table, with no benefit, so far as *I* can discover, either to ourselves or to any body else—*after the first hour*. Yet five hours, you say, is the usual time passed by our "grandee" at this daily meal called '*dinner*.' Now what would a waste of four hours from a day of twenty-four hours amount to—say in twenty-four years?"

"A sixth of that time would of course be four years."

"Exactly!" said Starlight. "And, assuming that there are in the world twelve thousand "grandees" whose means and habits correspond with those of our late host, their total waste of time during that period would be represented by one-twelveth of the number, that is, by one thousand gentlemen going to bed in this present year (1861) and sleeping for forty-eight years, or till the year 1909. Is it not so, my friend?"

"Not exactly, Starlight, for—unless you intend the gentlemen to drink in their sleep—against the loss in time, you must calculate the saving in wine."

“ You’re right, my friend,” said Starlight. “ And this leads me to the next little question, which is simply this—Is wine considered the ‘ *staff of life* ’ in this country ? ”

“ No ; but by a certain class it is regarded as an indispensable luxury.”

“ Well ; I have nothing to say against that. I only hope that Providence who supplies such luxuries may accompany each gift with a never-failing reminder.”

“ What’s that, Starlight ? ”

“ The remembrance of those ‘ *poor wretches*, ’ as they call them—fellow-beings, if not better beings in the sight of God—that so often want, not the luxuries, but the common necessities of life. These two little questions are the only ones of importance that occurred to my mind during our five hours’ sitting. Good night, Foster.”

After the lapse of a few days, the time had arrived to invite George the Fifth to an inspection of that “ wonderful invention ” which the merchant prince had extolled as “ a scientific wonder,” even before his princely eyes had been dazzled by the offspring of the guest whom His Majesty was pleased to call “ his friend.” An illustrated pamphlet on the subject of the invention, and a polite invitation to witness its operation, were now addressed to the prince at his great city establishment. At the expiration of three days—not having received an answer—I waited on

His Majesty, who assured me he had "seen nothing either of the book or the letter." As the king was busy in extending his notes on the £ s. d. portion of a great book that embodied the leading features of his own life, I retired from the presence of His Majesty, and proceeded to make enquiries of his private secretary. By this gentleman I was assured that there must be a mistake *somewhere*, as he had himself delivered both book and letter to his august master. I made no remark; but, on reflection, I came to the conclusion that, amid a multitude of more important matters, both pamphlet and letter might really have been overlooked, or, if seen, they might have been forgotten by the king. I could not then, and cannot now, believe that a prince who holds a "Bible meeting" at his palace once a week would tell a deliberate falsehood. Without referring to the *disputed* articles, I again waited on the king, and verbally conveyed to His Majesty the invitation that had previously miscarried.

"Really, my friend," said the king, "I should have been most happy either to have served you, or to have seen your friend's invention; but for some time to come I shall not have a moment to spare for any one—shan't really, Foster; and in a day or two I have to leave town in order to complete the purchase of a large landed estate."

At this moment one of the clerks of the establishment entered the council chamber.

"Mr. Paywell, a Canadian shipper, would be glad of an audience," said the clerk.

"Happy to see him. Ask him to walk in," said His Majesty. "Foster, tell your friend I will endeavour, if possible, to give him an hour some day next week."

The Canadian shipper now walked in, and I walked out.

Had a "damper" or wet jacket, at the outset of a journey, been capable of extinguishing my energies, I should long since have lived, if not died, in a work-house. Obstacles and opposition—especially unexpected obstacles and opposition on a straightforward path—have often clouded my spirit, but I have ever beheld sunshine in the distance; and, with renewed energy, I have always gained, if not all, at least a little of my desire. Entire failure in a legitimate or noble cause is something beneath any and every determined and independent spirit. Whenever it occurs there is something wrong either in the work or the worker—and Providence will never smile when that's the case. I have failed, but failed only when I have trusted to others instead of to *number one*; or when, on a mistaken path—and who has not walked, or may not walk on such a path?—I have myself abandoned a course that might have been avoided by the exercise of a little discretion, prudence, or wisdom.

In less than a week I had obtained promises (for

the first special scientific exposition) from half a dozen men who were in every way, except in the way of cash, superior to George the Fifth. But rank and title were the magnets of attraction in the eyes of the commercial "grandee." Though His Majesty is not one of those who would run a mile to avoid the humble salutations of a pauper, he would ride ten miles for the chance of a gracious recognition from a prince. Of the number of gentlemen just referred to were two or three aristocratic stars of the first magnitude. These would no doubt draw His Majesty George the Fifth in any direction, though Starlight, without them, might shine for ever without effect. The thing was tried and *partially* succeeded. Though the king was about to leave town "he would be happy to delay his departure for a day or two in order to meet so distinguished a party." Those of that party who were not going to Bow in their own carriages were requested to meet at the London Coffee House, in order to be conveyed to the factory in "Hansom" or other cabs. On the appointed day, and at the appointed hour, George the Fifth honored the London Coffee House by his presence. But the honor extended no further. Had His Majesty been a half-bred dog, instead of a thorough-bred king, and had some cruel waiter or cook attached a saucepan to the tail of the animal—though the canine creature might have been somewhat more noisy, it could scarcely

have effected a more precipitate retreat than that now made by George the Fifth. So soon as His Majesty heard from the scientific but untitled gentlemen assembled at the hotel that it would not suit the convenience either of the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Sutherland, or any other lord or duke to visit Starlight's factory that day, the merchant prince at once betrayed symptoms of disappointment. Is there no way of escape? Yes; great folks by aid of a lofty connexion or lofty monetary means may escape from almost anything in *this* world. In the present case a newspaper was sufficient for the required purpose. The newspaper—not the *Court Circular*—happened to inform its august reader that—"The Bishop of London had requested Mr. George ——." This was enough. In that notice there was a trifling error. His Majesty could not allow even that hour which he had promised to Starlight to escape before he had written to, or seen "his friend, the Bishop of London." The bishop would not, I am sure, have deprived Starlight of the presence of royalty; but it suited His Majesty's convenience to select the present time as an occasion for proving, in his own exalted person, and by his own unaided act, the strong attachment still existing between Church and "STATE."

At a subsequent period the attendance of His Majesty George the Fifth was secured on Starlight's behalf. But there is no accounting for the freaks

of royalty. Though George the Fifth—together with every celebrity by whom the invention was seen, without a single exception, expressed unqualified pleasure at the scientific exposition, George the Fifth was the only gentleman who for a single moment hesitated to record his opinion on paper. A certain noble-minded city merchant, one John Million, of the firm of Moneyson, Million & Co., happened to be present at Starlight's factory on the occasion of the royal visit. There is always some sort of deference paid to *intellect*, after all. John Million is a man of mind as well as a man of money; and John Million is probably the only merchant prince—in the same trade—whom His Majesty George the Fifth secretly (not openly) considers his superior. The following expressions would seem to justify the conclusion—

“I shall be most happy to serve your friend,” said His Majesty, on my calling at his council chamber; “but I would rather not give him a testimonial at present.”

“Yet you would be most happy to serve him? Pardon me for saying that my friend neither expects nor deserves to be *served* in that fashion. You have seen his invention, and say you are delighted with it, yet you refuse to give any body else the benefit of your opinion? This surpasses any thing I have yet found in *the way of the world*.”

“Foster, my friend, you are getting warm,” said His Majesty.

"Whenever that's the case, it is occasioned by the coldness, not by the warmth of another."

"You talk as if the invention were your own," said the king.

"I hope so—otherwise I should have had nothing to do with it," I replied.

"Has John Million given your friend a testimonial?"

"No;—simply because he has not yet been asked for one."

"Well; if *he* gives one *I'll* give one," said His Majesty, in a way that reminded me of what a little boy George, might say to his big brother, Johnny—"Johnny, if you'll put *your* finger in the pie, I'll put *my* finger in the pie."

"There will be no difficulty whatever in getting the paper at once, should Mr. Million be in his counting house."

So saying, I made a hasty retreat from the presence of the king. In less than half an hour I again confronted His Majesty in his council chamber.

"Here is the testimonial from your friend, Mr. Million."

"Very good!" exclaimed His Majesty, after he had read the paper. "Let me see, now,—what shall I say—but I wish you'd look in again in the course of the week, as you see, Foster, I'm very busy just now."

"It will not take you two minutes," I said.

"Well, what shall I say? Scientific matters are rather out of my way, although I have no doubt your friend's invention will be a commercial success."

"If you say what you think, it will be quite sufficient."

"Well; just sit down and write any thing you like, and I'll sign it, as I want to complete the examination of this ledger."

The following is a *verbatim* copy—so far as it goes—of what I wrote, and what His Majesty signed almost before he had perused it.

"———, 13th April, 1861.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am glad to find that eminent scientific men have pronounced your invention for ——— to be a decided success.

"Having myself witnessed the power and practical character of the machinery, I may be permitted to add that, in my humble opinion, its application to the purpose for which it was designed would insure for the inventor *commercial* as well as *scientific* success.

"Yours truly,

"GEORGE ———."

The little want that had caused so much time and trouble to obtain was now supplied, and I had much pleasure in taking leave of His Majesty George the Fifth.

As every incident in the foregoing sketch is literally correct—although literary accuracy is not guaranteed in every word—the reader may find rough materials for forming his own opinion of the *generous disposition* of George the Fifth, without any attempt on the part of the draughtsman to modify or magnify the matter or soften the tone of so hasty an outline. But, without an explanatory note, it is just possible that some persons may view His Majesty by a clouded, unkind, or uncharitable light. By such persons the subject would be regarded in a totally different spirit to that by which the author is actuated. God forbid that I—“a brand plucked from the burning”—should, in noting a few of the vanities in *the way of the world*, be myself wanting in *charity* !

In *the way of the world*, there are, doubtless, thousands of “grandees” with faults a thousand times greater than any that could be laid to the charge of George the Fifth. Excessive vanity and the love of ostentatious display are probably the worst features about the golden monarch. But are there not thousands—some of whom may now censure what they have not the power to imitate—who—in His Majesty’s position, and with His Majesty’s means—would be equally vain and ostentatious, and perhaps far less kind and charitable? If His Majesty would rather give ten guineas and spend ten days at public meetings, through which his presence and his gift

would be reported, than secretly and silently devote an hour to serve "a friend," are there not other rich men who, while dispensing nothing, or next to nothing, in charity, would not for a single moment step out of their own selfish way to serve any human being—*but themselves*?

"Appearances are often deceptive," say the poet. A long and intimate personal acquaintance is the only thing by which one man can form a correct opinion of another. It takes more than a week or two, or a month or two, or even a year or two, to estimate, with anything like partial accuracy, the natural disposition of a brother mortal. To judge a man by report, or in the distance, is like guessing the name, character, or country of a ship—with hull down—when she is first sighted at sea. So far as my own knowledge and perception of human nature extend, I may state, as my humble opinion, that, in *the way of the world*, true benevolence and real Christian virtues may be more frequently found in a retiring and unobtrusive heart, than in those lay figures whose forms are familiar either to the public eye or the public ear. Some men are for ever *talking* about "*good*," while others are quietly *doing* it. But let me, in the last note of explanation to the preceding sketch, refer to the time and cause of my introduction to George the Fifth.

About seven years ago I was engaged on a work of reference that necessitated personal visits to the most

eminent houses in the kingdom. Among the merchant princes on whom I called was His Majesty George the Fifth. Approving the object of my visit, the king fairly “took me off my legs” with civilities. I was at once “his friend”—his *everything*! And, from all I saw and heard, I believed, and still believe that George —— was, and is, one of the most persevering and successful men of the age. In due time his perseverance was duly noted—in the work referred to—as something worthy of imitation by aspiring young Englishmen. I also believed the merchant monarch a *real* philanthropist, and recorded my opinion accordingly. Had I gone no further, nobody would have blamed me, and I should not now have to record a step which I myself deem highly blameable. I did that which at this moment I would not do—not if the act would secure me possession of one-half the British Empire. By pandering to the vanity of the king, I made a partial sacrifice of my own independence. I inscribed the second edition of one of my works to George the Fifth. Now, would any body that knows George —— think of associating his name with literature? Whatever may be the good qualities of His Majesty, the mind of the king is certainly not of a literary stamp. Why then did I bend the knee to the golden monarch? It was not with the hope of obtaining gold. I was too independent for that. I was not a likely being

to become a pauper on a rich man's purse. George the Fifth gave me all I ever asked. As one of a committee for erecting a monument to an eminent public character, I on one occasion received a guinea from His Majesty; and another guinea at a subsequent period for a Ragged School. I neither envied nor wanted the king's gold. It was "court festivities" that for a time deprived me of common, or rather of "*good sense*."

By the foregoing outspoken sentences I shall possibly incur the lasting displeasure of George the Fifth. I can't help that. But let me assure the king that at the present moment I feel a deep interest in his welfare—deeper by far than I ever felt when seated as a guest at his royal table. Only a few weeks ago I received from George the Fifth a friendly letter. *As such* let His Majesty accept *this*. Yet, come what may, I must speak "the whole truth and nothing but the truth." Though all the world should regard me as the "veriest worm" that ever crawled, I will not murmur, if, in my sincere and earnest desire to be other than I have been, and better than I am, my feeble words and humble labor shall only prove acceptable in the sight of God. The only valuable thing I have myself discovered—a discovery the priceless treasure of which I would not exchange either for the entire gold of Australia, or for all the fertile fields of New Zealand—may be shadowed by

a gentle castigation administered to George the Fifth by a worthy minister of the gospel. On His Majesty addressing the boys of a charity school, and telling them, "If they only persevered, as *he* had done, they might all become monied men, that, in fact, they might all make their fortunes"—the bold and honest divine, in his reply, thanked His Majesty for the assistance he had rendered to the school, but reminded him at the same time, that he must not lead the scholars to suppose that the only thing they had to live for was "TO MAKE MONEY."

Chapter viii.

INCREASING MONETARY DIFFICULTIES
AND LIABILITIES OF AN INVENTOR.—
“TRIO.”—A CHRISTIAN JEW.—VANITY OF
RICHES.—COMMERCIAL “GRANDEES.”—
MOUNTAIN AND MEADOW.—THE CHAN-
CELLOR OF COMMERCE.—JAMES MAKE-
BREAD.—JIM CALL.—BEGGING LETTERS.
—A SUBJECT WORTHY THE ATTENTION
OF ALL.—TOM TIT.

“HOPE deferred maketh the heart sick.” In a worldly point of view, every inventor must be prepared to encounter this kind of sickness. If he is not also prepared, by moral, mental, and physical means, to fight selfish or dishonorable adversaries, and to patiently pursue his course, with a fixed determination to overcome all obstacles, he had better “pull up” at the first mile-stone; for if courage should fail in the middle of the journey the “hope” of the traveller might as well have been extinguished at the beginning.

Starlight’s trials were now of the most severe kind. I verily believe that nine persons out of every ten, or probably ninety-nine out of every hundred, would have utterly failed under such an accumulated and still increasing load of difficulties. His energy, patient endurance, and manly fortitude, were something marvellous; but his tact, in finding some loophole by which to escape impending danger was something more marvellous still. His inventive power is not of that comet-like or transitory character that appears for an hour and then departs for an age or for ever. His spirit is like a fixed star. So long as the mortal globe by which it is surrounded, or through which it

shines, shall last, the little luminary will still be seen. Starlight is an inventor not only to-day, but every day. He not only invents some great project, but a thousand little ones by which the original is supported or borne in triumph to its permanent or self-supporting resting place. His little bark or series of little barks on which, through all the calms and storms of life, he has contrived to keep his head above water, would again and again have foundered, had not the inventive faculties of the captain proved equal to every emergency, and served as a safe and ready anchor for himself and his freighted store. It is to be hoped that the immortal spirit of this extraordinary being may, *in the end*, secure for itself an anchorage still more safe and lasting than that which it has hitherto found for its temporary habitation—the body. But at present I am dealing with the temporal, not the spiritual features of the character. *Distant* stars may be referred to hereafter.

Many eminent men had now seen Starlight's "wonderful invention." But many more had yet to come. The subject was just beginning to be talked about in scientific circles; and it would never do to let the lamp go out for want of oil. But it was just at this moment that oil was wanting. Starlight's exchequer was again exhausted. He had for several weeks contrived to "keep up the steam" at his temporary factory—although the source of supply by

which his own spirit and that of his machinery had been kept in motion proved an impenetrable mystery to his "private secretary." Though private secretaries are supposed to know something that is going on in the secret chambers of those whom they serve—especially when there are any difficult problems to solve, or dangerous barriers to pass—the title of *private*, so far as I was concerned, had for some time past been a *misnomer*. The only private matter with which I had been long familiar was confined to the anything but agreeable knowledge that Starlight must have been paying heavily for a key to somebody's bank, inasmuch as the balance at his own—about six shillings—had been stationary for several months. But a longer concealment of difficulties had become impossible. Certain matters in the way of correspondence needed the prompt attention either of a private secretary or some other confidential servant. Starlight not only wanted an immediate supply of money from somebody, but there were a good many somebody's who wanted a supply of money from Starlight. The largest and by far the most forbearing of his creditors were fortunately located at a considerable distance from the scene of action. They resided on the American side of the Atlantic. Had they lived on this side, and obtained a view of the monetary hawks that hovered over their debtor, they might possibly have closed on him and his offspring

at once, in order to prevent others from tearing them to pieces.

“Trio.” Under this signature certain of Starlight’s American supporters had frequent communication with the inventor. The gentlemen were large creditors—not only large creditors, but they were evidently a *trio* of enterprising and generous friends. While their business-like letters did honor to the united intellect of the firm, the noble sentiments conveyed in each and every communication were equally creditable to the heart of the writer. But hope again and again deferred—where a heavy venture has been launched on a promising enterprise—may sicken the heart of the best sailor, or sadden the spirit of the warmest friend. “Trio” knew Starlight’s invention. They knew nothing of the daily, monthly, and quarterly difficulties of the inventor, in his ceaseless endeavour to benefit both himself and others. “Trio” therefore, like other trios, solos, and quartets, that made up anything but a harmonious body of creditors, began to evince some slight symptoms of impatience. But Starlight knew that, in the present case, the only way to get out of debt was to get deeper into it. Therein was his only chance.

Will nobody lend Starlight £500? Will nobody lend £500 to keep from some old store shop, or to save from the dark cellars or deep vaults of oblivion, Starlight’s scientific offspring? Will nobody lend

£500 to preserve for posterity something worthy of posterity? Several *very rich* and well known men have already seen the invention—have already, both verbally and by letter, declared that “the mechanical beauty and perfection of the invention can only be equalled by its national importance and great commercial value.” Have these eminent men written and spoken what is true? Where there is no hope or expectation of profit or fame, by a false declaration—surely there is not one of them that would deliberately publish a lie? I think not—not one. The public reputation, if not the private respect of each one is too precious to be thus wantonly thrown away. Well; here, as they themselves declare, is a subject of “national importance.” Is there not one amongst the monied batch of public men and reputed patriots whose unselfish interest in a thing of “national importance and commercial value” is worth £500? Is there not *one* that will back his opinion for that amount? The question is asked, not for the *first* nor for the *second* time. Now for the reply—NOT ONE. I speak not of men like George the Fifth, and others of the same school, who are well known both for their great riches and the (published) extent of their charitable performances. The “good work” in which these men are engaged would of course prevent them from throwing a penny on the path of science—although it is the application of science to manufacture

by which they have made every penny they possess. No; His Majesty was never asked to lend Starlight so much as half a penny. The only question—after he had signed the testimonial written by Starlight's secretary—he was subsequently asked, will be noted hereafter. So much for the rich men of the world who would advance science on the unscientific plan adopted by the counterfeit sportsman, who advances his pheasant by knocking it down before it takes wing. And so much for those reputed Christian men of the world who assist others only on well-established "scientific principles." They are like a well known nobleman, who once said, "I never object to lend a helping hand to merit that has been duly recognised by the public"—that is, a helping hand is not tendered till it is *not wanted*.

Soft! It is not a Christian but a Jew I now see before me! Yes; in suitable, if not classical phraseology, I may observe that a Jew is about to "supply the needful." I can imagine hearing the reader, on his eye lighting on this announcement, exclaim, "Then, of course, Starlight is about to be Jew'd!" Suspend your judgment for a moment, gentle reader. Before you thus deride a Jew, remember that, in *fair dealing*, there are plenty of Christian Jews, while, in the opposite calling, there is certainly no lack of "Jewish" Christians. In illustration of the former class, the following brief but truthful story may furnish a striking case.

A rich Jew who had *not* seen, but only *heard* of Starlight's "wonderful invention," was favored with a call. His sympathy was awakened by Starlight's precarious financial position. He observed that—"If his friend, Gladstone, had been an inventor, he would never have got into such a fix." But the Jew at once offered to lend the present inventor all he now required—£500. Grateful for the timely aid, Starlight was ready to pay any interest the lender might demand.

"Never took more than six per cent. per annum from any body in my life; and I am sure I shall not take more in the present case."

Such was the Jew's answer. Beyond an I. O. U. no security was given for the loan. Another word, by way of comment, would be an insult to my *Christian* readers. Marginal or other *notes*, as the story proceeds, may disclose the rates of interest paid by Starlight to those who are *not* Jews, but who have no objection to "Jew" any body.

Now then, with a replenished exchequer, by which Starlight would be able for awhile to "keep up the steam" at his temporary factory, it was time to begin work in earnest; and I once more began to "beat the bush" for *great* men. Starlight's financial success and my own prospect of remuneration still appeared *distant*. But neither confidence nor courage had yet given way. Though seven months had elapsed since

—by Starlight's prophecy—Mrs. Foster, “if she preferred riding to walking” was to have had a carriage, the lady had no occasion to be informed, as she well knew, that both her own carriage and my commission were still *prospective*. With Starlight's any thing but elevated position in view, I had not asked, nor had I any intention to ask, for a single dollar. I had at least *one* friend in the world, who was ready to contribute to my temporary wants ; and as the truthful words of the poet ever consoled me with the knowledge that—

“Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long ;”

I was always hopeful and happy. As for riches—I prayed, and still pray, that I might never be rich, unless a corresponding increase of grace from above should enable me to make a *proper* dispensation of such riches. If I have any desire to be rich, it is a desire to be rich in “usefulness”—to be like some humble-minded, honest, but ingenious mechanic, who, though unknown to the world, and without any great “talent,” still contrives in his own quiet way, to do something towards the advance of civilization, and the benefit of a greater number of persons in the world than *number one*. When I behold the misery—rather than happiness—that wealth often entails on its unfortunate holders, it would be worse than

madness to hope for riches merely for the empty vanity that attends their possession. Of such self-deluded seekers after happiness, the apparitions of many ghostly objects now flash on my mind ! Here are two or three with whom—during my commercial career—I have either lived, or with whom I have been intimately associated by business. Two gentlemen, in whose establishment I for some time resided, may be called—

MOUNTAIN AND MEADOW.

Mountain and Meadow had for many years filled important situations in the eminent house of Fountain, Pillar, and Branch. In the course of time, Mountain grew too big for his exalted position. His importance threatened a double danger—that of eventually toppling over both its master and the house over which he ruled. But he had been an old and faithful commander, and the firm whom he had served, while wishing to save themselves from commercial shoals or shipwreck, wished also to save their servant.

Unlike Reckless and Venture who formerly withdrew from the same establishment—as noted in the first volume of this work—and who had but little money and less brains, Mountain had a fair share both of money and wit, and appeared a likely man to obtain success on any path whereon self-interest might induce him not to overrate his own import-

ance. A removal to another locality and a change to another branch of business soon became subjects for his consideration. They were suggested by his employers, Fountain, Pillar, and Branch. An immediate adoption of the suggestion by Mountain secured for him the support of his old house. This in itself gave promise of a goodly lift on the way to fortune.

Mountain had a brother. But—in commerce—two mountains are usually better friends at a distance than when in close proximity to each other. Meadow was therefore selected as a more suitable partner for the “master mind.” The new house prospered exceedingly, and Mountain and Meadow soon became rich men. But the riches and pleasures of *this* world occupied all their thoughts. When they were not busy in making money, they were engaged—each on his particular hobby—in spending it. They didn’t spend any thing in charity, but said, “All beggars ought to go abroad.” A horse-race was Mountain’s delight, while a steeple-chase would drive him into ecstasies. Meadow, in addition to his love for a race, loved to see what he called “a good fight.” He loved to see a dog-fight, a man-fight, or any other fight in which he was not himself personally engaged. I have never forgotten, shall never forget, the brutal delight with which, in the cellar of his own warehouse, he witnessed the protracted and—to all but himself—painful death of a poor cat, as it struggled

to free itself from a terrier that was urged to the encounter by its unfeeling master. Of course, Mountain and Meadow were not godly men. Not only were they themselves devoid of any thing in the shape of godliness, but they objected even to the semblance of such a thing on the part of others.

I happened to be present on one occasion when a sedate-looking well-dressed man entered the warehouse of Mountain and Meadow. The gentleman wore a white neckerchief, and, in other respects, his appearance had something of a clerical character about it, although the bearer was a tradesman. When he had left the department in which he had made some purchases, Mountain said to the salesman—

“What’s the name of that buyer?”

“Mr. —, of Whitechapel,” was the reply.

“Has he bought much?” said Mountain.

“No, sir,—very little,” replied the salesman.

“I thought so,” contemptuously added Mountain.

“He’s only a psalm-singer. What can you expect from a psalm-singer?”

Poor Mountain! Neither his money, his commercial position, nor his self-importance saved him from the most awful visitation that can befall a being invested with an immortal soul. He became a lunatic, and died in a private lunatic establishment. What a boon to the poor, raving madman would have been psalm-singing, song-singing, or any other

strains of harmony that might have tended to soothe or pacify a mind deprived of the very soul of life!—a living body *dead* even to the purposes for which it came into the world.

By a remarkable coincidence, or by “accident,” as some persons would say, a gentleman—commonly known in the City as “Jim ———,” say, Jim Call—a sporting companion of Mountain, and one of the junior partners in the old house, committed suicide about the same time that Mountain’s distracted brain found rest—in the tomb.

The subsequent career of the house of Mountain and Meadow was a brief one. After the loss of the *head* of the establishment, the concern gradually declined; and about three years ago its commercial extinction was publicly announced.

Let me now turn to an old business acquaintance, whom I will call—

THE CHANCELLOR OF COMMERCE.

Like many other youths, the Chancellor, in early life, was a poor boy, and carried his wardrobe on his back. The value of his wardrobe told at once both the extent of his capital and the worth of his stock in trade. But the lad, even at this stage of his career, was a clever arithmetician, and excelled especially in the simple art of addition. Proof of this was soon supplied by the fact that, soon after he had

entered on his first situation, he married his master's daughter, thereby illustrating, in a somewhat less crude manner, the pith of a short dialogue between a couple of unpolished coachmen :—

“You're wery smart this morning, Joe? They tells me you've been a driving your young missus to the altar? That ain't true, is it Joe?”

“True as gospel, Tom; but not to the halter as you predicted for me in the Old Bailey.”

“But how did you manage the other thing, lad?”

“Why, one morning when young missus was a smiling on me, I druve her slap off to church, as the nearest cut to fortin.”

This mode of procedure indicates the rough but ready basis on which a young Chancellor of Commerce made his calculations, when, like a skilful general, he decided on the first bold step that might lead an adventurer to fame and fortune. If, by rapid strides to wealth, the traveller could, with equal rapidity, force his way not only to golden riches, but to still richer stores of lasting happiness, every commercial or political schemer would be commended for any speculation that might lead to so desirable a consummation. But experience in the present case, as in the majority of other cases, supplies painful evidence of the opposite result.

The Chancellor of Commerce soon became a very rich man, and soon after he became a rich man he

became a member of Parliament. During his brief senatorial labors, he displayed a capacity for figures that would have done honor even to a Chancellor of the Exchequer. But the Chancellor of Commerce was a worldly man, in the most worldly sense of the term. Nobody ever accused him of benefiting—in a charitable way—any body but himself. In commerce, he made fortunes for many, because he couldn't help it—inasmuch as his vast commercial stores needed junior partners, or captains, to extend the connexion and add to the power and pocket of their chief. Let us, in charity, assume that the bullying tone adopted by the Chancellor towards those in authority under him was only the incipient stage of that malady under which the rich man subsequently suffered. Here are the identical words—names of individuals excepted—employed by the Chancellor on entering his own warehouse, some time before he was committed to the charge of a kind keeper—

“Holloa, there! Where's Brown? Where's Jones? Where's Robinson?”

Just at the moment he was speaking, and had seated himself on the counter, a porter, in the discharge of his duty, happened to be wheeling a large basket—commonly called a “steamer”—which, in a wholesale house, is used for conveying sold goods from the various departments to the entering room.

“What the d—l is the meaning of this noise when

I speak?" furiously enquired the Chancellor. "Here!" he continued, addressing one of the warehousemen, and pointing to the porter from whom the noise proceeded, "just send that fellow to h—ll."

Alas, for all human greatness! The Chaneellor of Commerece was worth nearly *four millions sterling*! Poor man! He never knew the worth of money. Why? Because he never used it when he had both the power to apply it, and the sense for its application; and it was, of course, useless to him when he was not sensible even of its possession. It is well known by all who knew the Chancellor, that for several years before his death, he imagined himself to be a carpenter, and that he received from his employer (keeper) weekly wages in that capacity.

It was only the other day that another gentleman—proprietor of probably the largest retail establishment in the world—left the world without then, or for some time previously, knowing anything that was passing therein. As I was not personally acquainted with the gentleman, I will simply observe that poor James Makebread laid up for himself a vast store of the good things which he was not long permitted to enjoy. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Here then, reader, on a few pages of letter-press, you have an unadorned but faithful record of three rich men who went mad, and another rich man who

committed suicide—and all within the brief space of a few years. With three of the gentlemen I was on terms of intimacy, and always regarded them as unhappy beings, even before they lost their reason. Now, I do not for one moment presume to say either that all rich men are madmen or that all madmen are rich men. But are there not at the present moment hundreds of “grandees”—rich alike both in this world’s goods and in worldly wisdom—who are as mad as any lunatic that was ever sent to Bedlam? Yes; I verily believe that in the great English metropolis there are many of Folly’s sons who would sooner spend a hundred guineas on a night’s frivolity than secretly and silently dispense the hundredth part of that amount to save some poor wretch either from the workhouse or the grave. What difference is there between that lunatic “*whose own is no longer his own*,” and a rich miser who lays up his store for some spendthrift who will ultimately throw his riches to the dogs? The moral distinction (if any) is surely in favor of the lunatic? It was only a few weeks ago that the secretary of one of our noble public institutions informed me that a certain noble lord—a *poor creature* whose reputed income is not more than £200 a-day—considered himself heavily taxed in having to pay *one guinea* a-year to the charity.

But rich and *real* philanthropists are indeed not only worthy of admiration, but are entitled to uni-

versal sympathy, if not *pity*. And what a pity it is that some earthly paradise cannot be found for this little nest of "*true nobility*"—some secluded spot beyond reach either of the postman's knock, or the visits of that human phenomenon who for the last twenty years has lost a limb once a-year, or been pierced in every part of his body—*except the heart*.

Well. *I* recently wrote a "begging letter". It is probably the last that will ever proceed from the same pen. Though the fate of the epistle has not been communicated to those interested in the matter, the epistle itself has, no doubt, found its way either to the waste basket or the flames. But Starlight or any body else that knows "Frank Foster," knows how tenacious of life is any subject that may be *taken to heart* by that resolute individual. Therefore, gentle reader, though my *first* and *last* "begging letter"—like a departed spirit—has been "no more heard of" by a sorrowing and surviving parent, photography, as you are aware, has now become an "art" almost as common in *the way of the world* as that of telling lies—although, by the photographic art, *truth only* is supposed to be spoken. But I have never seen anything photographed from memory. Nevertheless, as I wish to preserve my "begging offspring" from total oblivion, here is a striking likeness, if not an exact copy:—

"HONORED MADAM,

"I am not a professional beggar. But I am about to beg a favor of one from whom many favors have been solicited by the world, and by whom many have been granted.

"I beg most respectfully to direct your attention to the accompanying circular. If you are not already overwhelmed with similar applications, the present appeal may possibly be deemed worthy of your favorable consideration. For the smallest contribution in aid of their godly work, the committee of St. Andrew's would, I am sure, thank you, not merely with vain or empty words of the passing hour, but with that deep and lasting sense of gratitude that lives for ever, when planted on Christian hearts by kindred sympathy, kindness, and love.

I will simply add, that to the spiritual welfare of the wretched district of St. Andrew's, Mr. Smith has, for nearly seven years, devoted his life and fortune.

"Believe me, honored Madam,

"With great respect, to remain,

"Your very humble servant,

"——— ———"

"To Miss ——."

THE WORKING MEN'S
CHURCH AND SCHOOL BUILDING
COMMITTEE
For Saint Andrew's District,
HAVERSTOCK HILL.

Patrons and President—

THE RIGHT HON. AND RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

THE REV CANON CHAMPNEYS, M.A., VICAR OF ST. PANCRAS.

Treasurer—THE REV. H. J. CARTER SMITH, M.A., INCUMBENT,
21, Queen's Terrace, N.W.

Chairman—THE REV. HENRY SINDEN, CURATE OF THE DISTRICT,
21, Queen's Terrace, N.W.

GEORGE AMOS, Plasterer
JOHN ALLRIGHT, Bricklayer
GEORGE COLE, Bricklayer
ALFRED HANNINGTON, Bricklayer
JOSEPH HEYWOOD, Painter
CHARLES LEVETT, Labourer
WILLIAM JENNER, Mason
HENRY O'KEY, Carpenter
GEORGE GILL, Plasterer
DAVID POTTER, Labourer
ROBERT NOYES, Painter
CHARLES SAPSFORD, Mason
JOSEPH HILL, Railway Porter
EDWARD BRAN, Leather Case Maker
EDWARD PRIN, Baker
WILLIAM AMBROSE, Writing Glazier
ROBERT HOPKINS, Carver and Gilder

STEPHEN HURST, Bricklayer
JOHN PRIEST, House Painter
JOHN EDWARDS, Shoemaker
JAMES FRANCIS, Sweep
JAMES CHAPMAN, Labourer
CHARLES GOSS, Tailor
WILLIAM MARTIN, Shoemaker
ROBERT DERMOTT, Letter Carrier
THOMAS GUNNING, Sweep
WILLIAM RAWLINS, Coachman
WILLIAM FOWLES, Shoemaker
HENRY LEA, Labourer
BENJAMIN SMITH, Bricklayer
GEORGE FRENCH, Shoemaker
THOMAS TAYLOR, Labourer
JAMES KAVEN, Shoemaker

Honorary Secretary—WILLIAM GORDON CORFIELD, Esq.,
8, Queen's Terrace, Haverstock Hill, N.W.

Auditor—F. J. ORWIN, Esq.

Bankers—

Messrs. ROBERTS, LUBBOCK & Co. | Messrs. COUTTS & Co., Strand.

The above body of Working Men respectfully invite attention to the following facts:

The District of St. Andrew's, Haverstock Hill, contains at least 11,000 souls, chiefly day labourers, very poor, and living in single rooms. It is a maze of finished and unfinished houses and streets, of brick-fields, and unformed roads. It has *no permanent Church or Schools—no Endowment—and no Stipend for the Incumbent*. We, Working Men of this district, desire to do what we can towards getting a large Church and School built to the honor of God, and shall be thankful for any help you may kindly render. The following quotation from a letter received from our President, THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON, will show the deep interest his Lordship takes in our united but humble effort:—

"When I consider that St. Andrew's district contains 11,000 souls, and that most of these are poor, and that as yet there is only accommodation for Worship—and that in a temporary Church—for 500, I feel that there is an urgent claim upon us all to exert ourselves. We must not rest till an adequate Church and good Schools are obtained. Neither can we be satisfied till we have a fair endowment for the Clergy. It will not do to be dependent, as we have been hitherto, on the self-denial of a Clergyman ready to work, not only without any remuneration, but at a great sacrifice of his personal means. With an earnest prayer that God's blessing may rest upon the work which this Committee has taken in hand, and hailing the formation of such a Committee among the poor themselves as a happy omen for the Church.

"I am, my Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

"THE CHAIRMAN."

"A. C. LONDON."

The reason that induced me to send the foregoing letter and circular to Miss —— has prompted me to insert them here. Let me, in the present case, hope for a more favorable result.

There is every probability that this volume will find its way into the hands of many commercial “grandees.” Now, then, ye “men of mark,” whose coffers are full and running over, here you have an opportunity for spiritual distinction ! It is not long ago that, in the short space of a few days, you subscribed nearly *twenty thousand pounds sterling* for one of the noble charitable institutions of London. Yes ; but, in reply to this, you may say, “Such were not *voluntary* contributions, although they appeared under that head ; for the committee of collectors on that occasion happened to be “our *own* bankers,” who, by putting the “screw” on *number one* forced hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of pounds from human figures which would otherwise have appeared on the list—if they appeared at all—for a single unit, unsupported by a cipher.” Very true. But you have no such *pressure* now. Your non-compliance in the present case will not on that account subject you—at least in this life—to the return of any bill you may present for discount. Come then, ye City “grandees” and “merchant princes,” let the world see what you will do when an appeal comes not on your banker’s book, presented to you, in person, by your “own

banker," but on a little bit of unstamped paper from a poor literary scribbler, who has no pretension whatever to any influence, power, or "talent," except what may come from above. Some of you have sent—"to the author of 'Number One'"—kind and complimentary letters, urging me, in the event of my life being spared, to "continue the work." Now, then, let me not only hear of, but *see* the worth of your commendation. Thank God, *I* don't want your money. It is asked not for one man, but for thousands of spiritually destitute souls! If you will give *only* on condition that your gifts shall be proclaimed to the world, I will not only have posted on the backs and bellies of a row of street-trampers the £ s. d. value of your contributions, but will also engage that the placards—like those of Moses and Son, and other *public benefactors*—shall be exhibited in any part of the City or suburbs you may desire. If, instead of sending your contributions to the Rev. Carter Smith, you would rather take them to, and make the acquaintance of, the bishop of the diocese, I feel sure that that deservedly respected prelate would be happy to see you, and to afford you a welcome not less cordial than that which his lordship has accorded other "merchant princes." I am not personally acquainted with the bishop—having no desire whatever to know any *great* man, *except at a distance*;—but is it not possible to know a man with whom we have not personally communed?

If this be impossible, the present appeal, so far as I am concerned, must utterly fail. But does not the case speak for itself? Look at the circular! Note the social position and the *professional* rank of the men by whom the committee is formed! England contains a large number of charitably disposed persons, whose benevolent feelings expand or contract according to the aristocratic or democratic character of the various committees who appeal to national sympathy on behalf of the poor. A working committee of *gentlemen*, headed by an earl, has a much better chance of success than a committee of *working men*. Yet, examine the little paper issued by *thirty-three* workmen of St. Andrew's district. Did ever a nobler paper issue—even from royalty itself? It is an appeal not only to the pocket, but to the heart also. Its insertion here may at least furnish *one* proof in support of such a declaration. Christian workmen are Christians indeed! I love the humble worshipper, though he may be a pauper in everything but piety. There are many inducements, or even attractions,—*apart from holiness*—to lead other classes to a place of worship. But there is little, beyond the dictates of his own heart, to lead a laborer there. Some persons may call the committee-men of St. Andrew's "common men." COMMON! Should such a word be applied to any *well-conducted* human being? If it is an appropriate *leader* for bad characters, is it less applicable to

a rich "commoner" than to a poor one? Are there not hundreds even among genteel Christians who hope and pray to be ranked with the "commonwealth" of happy spirits in eternity? Let us, then, in our temporary dwelling-place, love those with whom we trust, at no very remote period, to dwell for ever! I will simply add that their present pastor is not one of those who think the merit of a sermon is measured by its length. And for my own part, I candidly confess I infinitely prefer half an hour's faithful exposition of the gospel to a miscellaneous discourse from some highly-gifted and zealous Christian, who, in trusting to memory for matter, forgets one thing that is not so easily forgotten by his hearers—namely, that "his sermon lasted just *sixty minutes!*" When I wrote to direct the attention of Miss —— to Mr. Carter Smith, I had not even exchanged sentences with the reverend gentleman, and have since done so only for a few moments. But I have *heard* him; and, while admiring the unadorned eloquence and potent simplicity of his preaching, I may assure my readers that the preacher is not one of those *fashionable* priests who "halt between two opinions"—not one of those who are half Roman catholic and half protestant—whose affections are half in Rome and half in England. Better that such beings were *nothing!*—they would then be harmless for doing mischief. Better for the world—perhaps for them-

selves—that they were merely as the empty wind that passeth by unseen and unnoticed. The Rev. Carter Smith does not thus dishonor his clerical robes. With this assurance, gentle reader, I must leave the gentleman—where I trust your money will be ready for him—in “your own hands.”

Did such an appeal—*for such a case!*—proceed from some zealous dissenter—instead of from thirty-three *laboring* churchmen—the result would not for a moment be doubtful. Though, in the Church of England, “UNITY” is for ever preached, sad indeed is the evident lack of *unity* among the fold. Leaving out of the question individual and isolated acts of munificence on the part of certain rich members, I doubt whether all the churchmen in the kingdom ever accomplished—even in ten years—what was effected by Mr. Spurgeon in a few months. The extraordinary character of the man might have made *his* case an exceptional one. Nevertheless, it differs only in magnitude and notoriety from cases which are being daily and *quietly* enacted by various dissenting bodies.

There is my old and faithful friend, Tom Tit. *Professional gentlemen* would probably “look down” on Tom Tit—although they might, with profit to themselves, “look up” to him. But Tom Tit is only a tradesman—an Oxford Street tradesman, that’s all! He is also a dissenter. Yet he makes no *profession* whatever of religion. Though I have known him

intimately for nearly twenty years, I never heard—from himself—anything concerning either his religious creed, or his contributions in aid thereof. It was “by mere accident” that I happened, about three years ago, to call on Tom Tit just at the moment that his pastor—minister of a large chapel in the Regent’s Park—paid the gentleman a visit. To this “accident” may be ascribed the revelation of the present little incident—an incident from which many of our wealthy churchmen may (if they please) take the hint that is now thrown out to them by a very humble fisherman.

“Good morning!” said the worthy divine, as he shook hands with the *little* member of his flock, and at the same time drew from his pocket a small memorandum book; “that debt of *four thousand pounds*, with which our church is at present burdened, must be paid off. It is my intention to give the congregation three years for the accomplishment of this object; and I wish to have appended to the name of each member an intimation of the amount that is likely to be forthcoming, in periodical instalments, within that period. What sum shall I affix to your name?”

“Well; I think you may put me down for *one hundred pounds*.”

Such, reader, is the sum and substance of the conversation by which my friend, Tom Tit, answered the appeal of his pastor. The three years have expired,

the money has been paid, and the church is out of debt. I will not insult any member of the Church of England by another word on the subject.

After this brief but, I hope, pardonable divergence, you will I am sure be glad to hear something more about my friend Starlight. And I promise—either in this or in a future volume—the revelation of some strange and truthful scenes in *the way of the world*, together with sketches of a few more remarkable characters than those whose impressions on the mind of “Frank Foster” have already been committed to paper.

Chapter ix.

“MY FRIEND, SO AND SO.” — ENGLAND
AND AMERICA.—VOTE OF THANKS.—
AUTOGRAPHS OF EMINENT MEN.—A
PUBLIC COMPANY.

“FRIEND!” There is not in the English language another word so much abused as this. By some persons it is constantly applied to one whom they know to be their enemy, while by others it is as often misapplied to one whom they *suppose* to be a friend.

“MY FRIEND, SO AND SO.”

As a complimentary figure of speech, “My friend, So and so” is the title of one of the most popular little fictions of the present day. It is a fiction that is not only uttered, but one that is daily acted on by tens of thousands in *the way of the world*. The complimentary but fictitious spirit of the title not unfrequently runs through the subsequent address of each hypocritical adopter. The speakers begin with what children call “a little story” or “fib,” and end with a good many big ones. The dissembling politician, who addresses “My friend on the opposition benches,” would—if he had that friend in the palace yard, and duelling had not been prohibited—be ready to exchange his empty words for solid shot. The lawyer, who is surprised at “My learned friend who appears for the plaintiff,” would readily—if the privileges of

the bar extended so far—assess the damages that are going against him on the pate of his “learned brother.” The layman who, with misplaced confidence, may have entrusted to the hands of some hypocritical acquaintance a subject over which he has no further control, deems it *policy* to call that hypocrite “My friend,” though he knows that “My dear friend” is doing all he can to deprive him of his just dues. Thus it is with all classes, and in all countries. There is far more of “artificial morality,” far more of fiction, and a far greater number both of little deceptions and great lies in the daily conversation of the world than ever were, or ever will be, committed to paper—even though every town had its novelist, and every village its country recorder. “Artificial friendship”—so fashionable in the present day—has existed, in a greater or lesser degree, since the time when Brutus, in order to prove the depth of his love, sent his dagger direct to the heart of “his friend” Cæsar; and similar proofs of friendship will, no doubt, continue to be furnished till the end of the world.

If every man *told* his “friends” what he really *thought* about them, society—fashionable society especially—would be reduced to the smallest possible dimensions.

It has been said that between “bold-faced villains,” as the poet Otway calls them, there is a greater show of honesty, both in speaking and acting, than that

displayed by polished gentlemen of the world, in their social, political, or commercial dealings with each other. I believe it. The poet's "bold-faced villains" have no reference either to cheats, thieves, or fashionable "black-legs," but to men who—like the noble-minded Garibaldi—speak and act agreeably with their own honest convictions, regardless alike both of the world and their own personal safety. But the danger, even to one's ease and comfort, of so bold a game is typified by the present position of the greatest patriot of the present age, and one of the greatest men the world ever saw. Had the patriotism and valour of this unselfish man been allied to the subtlety of that royal head—not Victor Emmanuel's—that would fain be crowned "Emperor of Rome," the brave Garibaldi might at this moment have been a king in all but name, and far greater than a king in power. But discretion is a goodly breast-plate both in the field and in the homestead, both by the fire-side and by the more dangerous fire of some commissioned foe. It is by no means a pleasant thing to be assailed, knocked down, or wounded either by a private friend or a public enemy.

In this respect the movements of a public character differ only in their magnitude from the tiny dangers to be encountered or avoided by a private individual. True friendship is like a cautious little child that feels its way step by step, and grows bolder as it grows

stronger. When I first became acquainted with "my friend" Starlight, I imagined the business then in hand would have lasted only a month or two, and that, with the close of the business, I should have shaken hands with an agreeable gentleman, and—as is too often the case—taken leave of a cheerful companion for ever. I did not for a moment suppose either that Starlight's companionship or business would have covered so large a space of time; nor did I think that an "accidental" business acquaintance would have ripened into personal friendship, or that my esteem for the individual would grow stronger as the monetary prospects of the man grew darker. At first I thought more of the invention than of the inventor. I passed unnoticed any personal peculiarities on the part of the man, because the length of our acquaintance would not have justified me in making allusion to such matters, and because I believed the gentleman to be—what time has confirmed—one of the greatest scientific inventors of the day. More of this in a future volume. Inventors are not only very sanguine but very eccentric or careless individuals. Though Starlight never wiped his shoes or boots on the hall mat—though he left those daily impressions on the dining-room carpet that repeatedly called forth from Mrs. Foster the declaration of, "I know who's been here"—though he always left the garden gate wide open,

and did many other funny things—these and far greater peculiarities were at first noticed only as little specks on the frame of a mirror that reflected a great mechanical genius.

But while time made the title of “my friend” something more than a mere assumption between Starlight and myself, it also lessened our reserve, and enabled each to “speak out” in a manner in which only friends can speak without offence to each other. Let the first dialogue in which two gentlemen “differed only to agree” confirm the justice of the observation. And, should the present or future volume happen to cross the Atlantic, and Starlight’s penetrating vision light on the contents of the same, his heart will no doubt bear its silent attestation to the truthful character of the record.

Seven o’clock, a.m. It is a beautiful morning!—but Starlight is not, at present, seen to the best advantage. No spirit—except an immortal one—can be for ever shining. “My friend” does not, however, by outward signs and flourishes, or by any other vulgar demonstration, betray, to strangers, the least symptom of internal commotion. He never taps a feverish vein, except in presence of the person before whom it is intended the spirited display shall take place. Hark! Here he is! The same gentle knock. There is no passion in the knock, whatever there may be in the knocker.

"Foster!" said Starlight, as he entered the room, without carrying on his features that genial morning smile by which his private secretary was usually saluted, "I verily believe there has been a conspiracy formed against me."

"Indeed? I am sorry to hear it. Who are the conspirators?" I enquired.

"Everybody!" was the reply.

"Then, of course, *I* am one?"

"I said nothing of the sort," replied the inventor.

"But you said '*everybody*?'"

"Drop that, my friend," said Starlight, elevating his right arm, as a signal for attention. "Don't you think there is a conspiracy against me?"

"There may be—in your own imagination. Again I ask, who are the conspirators?"

"It really seems as if the entire nation had conspired against me," said Starlight, in a more subdued but desponding tone.

"Starlight, you talk nonsense; and that is unworthy of you. You can surely invent something better than that? If we are a nation of conspirators, why did you not stay at home?"

"Because you hold the purse-strings of the world."

"At which—like many other distinguished foreigners—you are anxious to have a pull?"

"Exactly! but there appears no chance of that, though you confess I have something worthy both of

the nation and of a draft from the national money-box? Your great and lordly officials acknowledge this."

"But I am now taking to your factory men who—in money matters—have greater weight than all the lordly officials in the kingdom. Bide your time, my friend, and see what these will do for you."

"I have no faith anywhere, or in anybody, except in the people," said Starlight. "The toadyism, the red tapeism, and the various bowings and scrapings in this country, are but so many strains on the dignity of those who call themselves free-born citizens. Such humiliation tends to lower the character of man to that of the animal."

"Admitting the justice of your remarks, will you pardon me for asking you to look at home! Can you see nothing *there* to reflect on the character of 'free-born citizens?'"

"Nothing!" exclaimed Starlight. "Name anything that is in any way degrading to the human race."

"I could name many things, my friend; but will give you three to begin with."

"What are they?" eagerly enquired Starlight.

"'Commercial brag,' 'political bluster,' and 'newspaper bunkum.' Though you are neither a commercial man, nor a senator, nor a journalist, you have not from your childhood been surrounded by the atmosphere into which noxious vapours flow, without

—if only in small quantities—inhalings into your system some of the infectious gases.”

“What’s that you say, Foster? I tell you, my friend, that in America, man is not only free, but his judgment is wholly unfettered.”

“I admit this, with regard to *certain persons*, who undoubtedly enjoy greater freedom than would be accorded them in this country. As types of that class may be mentioned the ex-M.P. for ‘*Marrowbone*,’ and—”

“I allude not to one man only, but to all,” said Starlight, interrupting me. “Pray, have you not in England men who dare not return to their own countries?”

“We have; and if it be kind on our part, it is equally kind on your part to give shelter to such men.”

“I tell you, my friend,” continued Starlight, with increased emphasis, “I tell you that purse-proud and selfish Englishmen know nothing of the noble features of the American character.”

“Then, it is a great pity that certain Americans should take so much trouble to make their *other* features so prominent. I am ready to admit that our knowledge extends rather to the counterfeit than to the *real* coin. But if the great American people allow themselves to be falsely represented and libelled, and other people to be bullied by such men as ——.”

“Let me tell you,” said Starlight, “that Mr. —— is an extraordinary clever fellow.”

“So is the devil,” I replied. “There has been a very talented American on this side who has recently been applying his abilities both to the injury of himself and his country.”

“Who is it?—name him,” said Starlight.

“Who is it?—why, your distinguished countryman, Sir Francis ——. I beg pardon, a knight would not, of course, be recognised on the democratic and sunny land of freedom—except it be, indeed, a night that would again display on the American escutcheon the renewed unity and consolidation of thirty-four stars in all their former brilliancy.”

My friend Starlight was instantly brightened up by a remark that at once changed the features of the man and the subject of his discourse.

“Ah, Foster! that night is not far distant! It will be one of the first nights in the coming year.* And will it not be the prelude to a glorious day?”

“I hope so,” I replied.

“Should you ever visit America, my friend,” said Starlight, as he shook me heartily by the hand, “then, Foster—”

“Yes, Starlight; I hope our meeting may then be

* This prophecy was delivered in December, 1861. At this period there was also the probability of a rupture between England and the Northern States of America.

the brotherly reflection of a more friendly feeling between our respective countries ; and that if, as you say, we really have been purse-proud, selfish, and overbearing, we may be so no longer."

"Good!" said Starlight. "And if, as you say, your brother, Jonathan, has really been inclined to bluster and boast, let us hope that he may bluster and boast no longer."

"Good!" I responded. "And let us henceforth live as all good brothers would wish to live, and as Christian brothers only can live—'in unity, peace, and concord.'"

"Amen, with all my heart. Good morning!" said Starlight, as he left the room with a more cheerful countenance, if not with a less warlike attitude, than that which accompanied him on his entrance.

When I had, for more than seven months, worked incessantly—six days in the week, and some of the nights also—in writing to, and calling on, a large number of the most eminent men in the kingdom, and in conducting the majority of the same to Starlight's factory, my labors in *this* respect were brought to a close. But it was unlike the close of a long parliamentary or commercial season, when the respective laborers retire for country quiet, or a little social enjoyment and domestic repose. Mine was only a change from arduous labor to anxiety. I was now anxious concerning the final result of such labor,

as affecting the critical position of the inventor, for whom I was concerned. Though "my friend" (?) the *Athenæum*—a journal *professedly* devoted to scientific and literary subjects—would say, "perish science! you should have stuck to trade and £400 a year." I had nevertheless—in the absence of any monetary reward—experienced the highest possible pleasure in having done something in aid of a nobler cause than that of merely advancing the selfish *£ s. d.* views of *number one*. Though it had proved a difficult matter to conduct to a factory—in a remote and dirty locality five miles from London—the class of men whose evidence was required, it was nevertheless a pleasing thing to hear from each visitor, expressions of delight at Starlight's scientific exposition. On this head, there was not a single exception among the large number of gentlemen by whom the inventor was honored; and the written testimonials of each and all subsequently corresponded with the unequivocal verbal commendations they had previously expressed.

Having convinced the "*wiseacres*" of the official world, the "*savans*" of the scientific world, and the "*grandees*" of the commercial world, that his "wonderful invention" was a *sterling reality*, Starlight now hoped, as he had reason to hope, that in a short time he should be a richer man to the extent of at least £100,000. That he had no doubt whatever

about this pleasing issue on his own behalf may be fairly inferred by the following declaration :—

“I deem it my duty to state that for the successful introduction of my invention into the United Kingdom, I am greatly indebted to Mr. ———, who not only brought a large number of the most eminent men in this country to witness the practical operation of my invention, but also obtained from them evidence of their opinions on the subject—as embodied in the subjoined testimonials.”

As the public would have cared nothing about the person or persons by whom a great inventor and invention had been introduced, Starlight’s compliment to his “private secretary” was withheld from the pamphlet intended for public circulation. Its present insertion is simply to show how near the inventor was—*or supposed he was*—to the realization of his hopes. Should any reader or inventor imagine he sees an ulterior object in the introduction of the paper, let me at once undeceive him. Whether the sequel to this story may, or may not, leave me a “rich man,” remains to be seen. But a participation in the trials and troubles, and the hopes and anxieties of *one* great inventor constitute a sum total of exciting labor that is enough for any human being that has passed the meridian of life. At all events, it is enough for *me*. The most promising overtures—*many have been made*—would not induce me to shake hands with any other inventor on a matter of busi-

ness. A second Starlight would altogether fail to “get up,” much less to “keep up,” the “steam” of Frank Foster, who cannot—on the shark principle—take a “fee” for services which are never likely to be rendered.

On the subjoined pages will be found *fac-similes* of the autographs of a few of the gentlemen to whom Starlight’s note refers. Out of a very large number of distinguished and enthusiastic admirers the following are selected—not because they are better qualified than those who are omitted to test the merits of a scientific subject, but because their names are likely to be more familiar to the public.

At the joint request of Starlight and his “private secretary,” the visitors (with one or two exceptions), instead of employing *deputies*, wrote their opinions themselves—as Starlight wished to preserve the *precious* documents.

As some of my readers may like to see a specimen of royal composition and penmanship, I append part of a letter from His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge—than whom a more agreeable visitor could not be named.

Copy of one paragraph from an Autograph Letter by HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE
DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, K.G., &c., &c.

April 23rd

1861.

Sir

It appears to me, that you
have succeeded in deriving
a most beautiful group, well
adapted for the object in view
and that your sketch may therefore
be considered as complete. I

must leave it to ourselves
now to gain their services
upon the machinery employed
in all the details. I beg

to remain, Sir,

Yours truly
George

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND, K.G.

Sutherland

THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON.

Yours obediently
Hartington

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF CAITHNESS.

Yours I am the truly
Caithness

GENERAL VISCOUNT GOUGH, K.P., G.C.B., K.S.I., &c.

Dear General

Yours
Sincerely

COLONEL LORD ALFRED PAGET, M.P.

Believe me

Yr. faithfully
Alfred Paget

THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN PAKINGTON, BART., G.C.B., M.P.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully
Johns. Pakington

THE RIGHT HON. SIR FRANCIS BARING, BART., M.P.

I am
Ever
Yours
Sincerely
Francis

WILLIAM BROWN, Esq. (of Liverpool), late M.P. for South Lancashire;
founder of the Liverpool "Free Library."

Ever respectfully
Yours
Wm Brown

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR RICHARD AIREY, K.C.B., Aid-de-Camp to
His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge.

Yours faithfully
Richard Airey.

Drfnd

R. W. CRAWFORD, Esq., F.R.G.S., M.P. for the city of London.

Yours faithfully
R. W. Crawford

COLONEL W. H. SYKES, F.R.S., M.P., (late Chairman of the
Hon. East India Company.)

Yours faithfully
W. H. Sykes,

W. S. LINDSAY, Esq., M.P.

Yours faithfully
W. S. Lindsay

ROBERT DALGLISH, Esq., M.P.

Yours very truly
Robert Dalglish

VICE-ADMIRAL WALCOTT, M.P.; one of the most independent and honorable men in the kingdom. Had he been anything else, he would (for past services) long since have had C.B. or G.C.B. attached to his name.

Very faithfully yours
J. Walcott

M. T. BASS, Esq., M.P.

I remain yours faithfully
M T Bass

REAR-ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD BELCHER, C.B.

Yours very truly
Edward Belcher
Rear admiral

REAR-ADMIRAL R. F. STOPFORD.

Yr faithful
R. F. Stopford { Recd.
 Del.

REAR-ADMIRAL GEORGE ELLIOT.

Yours faithfully
G. Elliot
 Rear Admiral

CAPTAIN THE HON. ARTHUR A. COCHRANE, C.B., R.N.,
 Commander of the "Warrior."

Yours truly
 Arthur A. Cochrane
 Captain R.N.

CAPTAIN SHERARD OSBORN, C.B., R.N.

Yours faithfully
 Sherard Osborn

CAPTAIN COWPER P. COLES, R.N.; the original inventor of the new system for constructing armour-plated ships. Having, with his pen, discharged, with some effect, several broadsides at the abuses at the Admiralty, he is now employed in preparing vessels that will be ready to engage a foreign foe in a still more deadly manner.

Yours truly
 Cowper P. Cole

SIR WILLIAM ARMSTRONG; a modern inventor of exceptional fortune, viz.: one whose reward has been equal to his merit.

Yours truly
 W. J. Armstrong

JOHN ANDERSON, Esq., of Woolwich Arsenal; one of the most (practically)
eminent inventors of the day.

John Anderson

WILLIAM FAIRBAIRN, Esq., F.R.S.; the eminent Engineer.

*Dear Sir
Yours sincerely
Wm Fairbairn*

THOMAS FAIRBAIRN, Esq.; one of Her Majesty's Commissioners for the
Exhibition of 1862.

*I am Dear Sir
Very faithfully
Thomas Fairbairn*

JOSHUA FIELD, Esq., F.R.S., (Maudsley, Sons and Field, the eminent Engineers.)

*Yours faithfully
Joshua Field*

JOHN PENN, Esq., F.R.S., (John Penn and Sons, the eminent Engineers.)

Yours truly
John Penn

JOHN SCOTT RUSSELL, Esq., F.R.S., Builder of the "Great Eastern."

J. Scott Russell.

JOHN TROTMAN, Esq., Patentee of the best Anchor of the present day. Not being an M.P., or not having influence at head quarters, his Anchor is thrown overboard (*unattached.*)

most sincerely
John Trotman.

P. LE NEVE FOSTER, Esq., Secretary Society of Arts.

Yours truly
P. Le Neve Foster

E. J. REED, Esq., Secretary to the Institution of Naval Architects.

Yours very truly
E. J. Reed.

JOHN DILLON, Esq., (Morrison, Dillon and Co.) ; the eminent warehouseman and reformer—one of the earliest advocates of free-trade, and a leading supporter of the original plan of “penny postage” and other commercial reforms.

Yours faithfully
John Dillon

GEORGE MOORE, Esq., (Copestake, Moore, Crampton and Co.) ;
the eminent warehouseman.

Yours truly
George Moore

WILLIAM CARPMAEL, Esq.; senior of the oldest house of its class in the kingdom.

Yours faithfully
William Carpmael Esq

Poor Starlight! "Poor, simple-hearted Frank Foster!"—the one for giving, and the other for receiving a vote of thanks out of due season. "How"—as our golden-eyed critic would say—"can anything be called 'successful' that has not been crowned with the *sterling reality*?" And the critic, in this case, would be justified by such a remark. The introduction of the word "successful" into Starlight's vote of thanks to his "private secretary" was indeed *premature*. Lip support is *one* thing; pocket support is *another* thing. Capitalists who declared Starlight's invention to be "one of the wonders of the age" were not disposed to invest anything *beyond words*, in making the "wonder" known. Starlight now discovered that it is not an easy thing, even in a nation that "holds the purse-strings of the world," to find ten gentlemen ready to invest £10,000 a-piece on anything so unlike bank notes, or so far removed from exchequer bonds, as property known under the title of "SCIENCE."

Well. What's to be done? Can there be *nothing* done with the invention? Can there be nothing done with a roll of testimonials such as probably the world had never seen?—for, at present, they were unknown to the general public. Are inventor and invention to be thus supported, only to sink or perish at last? Will none but paper boats, manned by pretty paragraphs and filled with praise, came to the rescue? Will the wealthy masters or authors of the paper crew, as they stand by and see “science” perish, content themselves with the stoic’s lament—“It’s a pity, but I can’t help it!” As at this critical juncture, these and various other queries arose in the minds of those immediately concerned, somebody—I forget the original suggestor—exclaimed—

“A COMPANY’s the thing! Why don’t you get up a COMPANY?”

I never heard any suggestion made in Starlight’s presence in which the inventor saw, or thought he saw, “something to his advantage,” that he did not at once pierce the matter to the very centre. With a penetration that borders on the marvellous, he sees in a moment whether a “hint” will serve his purpose, how far it will serve it—or whether it is likely to serve it at all. The subject is weighed and put aside for a moment’s consideration. After that brief reflection, it is weighed again, and either adopted or thrown overboard, as it may prove weighty or worth-

less. Great men sometimes treat human beings in this fashion, *after* they have *served a purpose*. This is not Starlight's way of doing business—though Starlight himself may not be *perfection*. God created man after his own image ; and great men reflect something of the majesty of their Creator, in *many* things ; but—since the fall—no man could possibly be perfect in *everything*.

“ A COMPANY ! What do you think of a COMPANY ? ” enquired Starlight, as he one morning made his appearance, with a step and tone of cheerfulness that in no way corresponded with his own critical position.

“ Well, Starlight ; though, at your factory, we have recently been honored by a goodly private company—”

“ I mean a *public* company, Foster ! ” hastily exclaimed Starlight, interrupting me. “ I heard a gentleman suggest ‘ a company ; ’ and, on making enquiries, I find that companies often get a good deal of money for what they have to offer ? ”

“ I know they do, Starlight.”

“ Especially for a thing of *real* value ? ”

“ And frequently for a thing of no value at all. They are often got up for the sole purpose of robbing the public.”

“ But a company of gentlemen for working my invention would benefit the public, would they not ? ”

“ Yes ; benefit the public, or *themselves*. With

good management both might in your case be benefited. But *good management* is, unfortunately, about the last thing in the world for which companies are celebrated."

"Well," said Starlight, "I see no hope in this rich but '*slow-going*' community, except through a company. We have been visited by great public characters; but I believe in the *public*, and the public only, Foster."

"But will the public believe in a company?"

"No doubt of it. Several of the distinguished visitors whom you brought to the factory say they would become extensive shareholders in any respectable company that may be formed for working my invention."

"Do you believe *them*, Starlight?"

Starlight smiled.

"But I believe in the *public*, Foster. And as you have a little faith there also, will you not aid me in *getting up* a company?"

"I know nothing about *getting up* companies, and never held a share in one in my life."

"Nor I," said Starlight. "But somebody else must manage the details. I have no doubt, my friend, you could get directors?"

"Probably so."

"And if you do so, I will do the thing '*handsome*'—you believe in that, Foster?"

"I believe in nothing *in* this world, or *by* this world, that has not actually taken place. Had we believed that Mrs. Foster's carriage would have been delivered nine months ago, should we not have been very much out of our reckoning?"

"Yes, my friend, but you may depend—"

"I will—I will depend on it, so soon as I see it drawn anywhere else but on the paper on which the lady sketched it nine months ago."

"But I promise—"

"It does not require any promise—dependent entirely on circumstances—to induce your 'private secretary' to do his duty. And the only return expected for that service, when rendered, is the simple discharge of duty—according to agreement—on your own part."

"You know my position just now, Foster?" said Starlight.

"Unfortunately I do."

"And you cannot leave—"

"No, Starlight; I will never leave you, till you have been raised from your present unenviable position—that is, if by God's help, *your own ingenuity*, and *my* humble energies, the thing can be accomplished."

I knew nothing about public companies. Starlight knew nothing about public companies. But an eminent commander—to whom I introduced Starlight—knew a certain secretary who professed to know, and

—as will hereafter appear—really did know, *all about* public companies. On such a subject, however, there was *one* man for whose opinion Starlight entertained the highest regard. Mr. William Carpmael, the patent agent, and senior of the oldest house of its class in the kingdom, had transacted Starlight's business for a great number of years. Mr. Carpmael was, moreover, a man in whose judgment not only Starlight, but other inventors had a high opinion, while the public regarded that gentleman as something like an authority on scientific subjects. Well. Mr. Carpmael did not think favorably of manufacturing companies, or at least of their management, in general. But Mr. Carpmael failed to see in what other way Starlight's valuable invention could be brought prominently before the public. In the absence of further evidence on the subject, Starlight and his "private secretary" resolved to get up a COMPANY!

And, O! how many new scenes and strange characters—that were never dreamt of by the author of "Number One"—have come to light through the mysterious art of "GETTING UP A COMPANY!"

A COMPANY! Yes, reader; should *I* be spared to write, and *you* to read, the *sequel* to the present story, you shall learn something about the splendid prospects of the promoter, the directors, and the shareholders of a public company—*especially of the*

promoter! If you would see Starlight emerge from a heavy cloud, and shine forth in his wonted brilliancy, you will, I am sure, as one of the members of a "good-natured public," follow the timely advice of a wise and generous-hearted critic, by taking, at some future period, a few more lines from the "poor, simple-hearted Frank Foster."

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AN ILLUSTRATED PAMPHLET,
ENTITLED
THE AGE WE LIVE IN ; or, DOINGS OF THE DAY
BY FRANK FOSTER

The above is a Key to the Second Series of "Number One."

* The reason for giving these opinions *in extenso* may be found in the first chapter of the present volume.

promoter! If you would see Starlight emerge from a heavy cloud, and shine forth in his wonted brilliancy, you will, I am sure, as one of the members of a "good-natured public," follow the timely advice of a wise and generous-hearted critic, by taking, at some future period, a few more lines from the "poor, simple-hearted Frank Foster."

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS *
AND
EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS ADDRESSED TO
THE AUTHOR OF "NUMBER ONE."

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

From the "MORNING ADVERTISER," 15th April, 1862.

"The autobiography of one who began life without advantages, and who has risen to a position of comfort and independence, must always possess a great charm for a large class of readers in this country. Those who have had a similar start in life, at whatever stage of their career they may be at the moment, take up such a work with pleasure and with satisfaction. They sympathise with the author's sorrows, admire the decision of character, the energy, the perseverance, and above all the success which has attended his endeavours. They forgive the somewhat egotistical and complacent tone by which such narratives are generally pervaded; and they hope, for themselves at least, an equally prosperous and satisfactory result. Such books are of immense advantage to the young; they excite and stimulate, they counsel, and they caution those who are as yet in the earlier stages of their career in life; and the lessons which the thoughtful reader may derive from them are of the most valuable nature. Those whose careers are well nigh past, who have done all that they need to do in the way of success in life, can afford to smile at the ludicrous mishaps which such an author is wont to narrate; while, on the other hand, those who have life before them may, if they are wise, profit greatly by the practical experience which is thus placed before them. The author of the present volume—which he tells us in his preface is his fifteenth, and probably his last—sketches his own progress, from the 'young man from the country,' who got a place 'on trial' in a large Manchester warehouse, up to a position just now, which we are gratified to learn is one of independence. In the story he has to tell there is nothing very remarkable—nothing more than some hundreds of the inhabitants of our suburban villas could narrate if they were so disposed, and if they had the author's literary tastes; but still he has contrived to invest his sketches with a large amount of interest. Filling in the details from his somewhat fertile imagination—though he assures us that he has adhered to fact in all the main features of his story—he has managed to give so good an account of himself, and to present himself, in fact, so favourably to our notice, that we are pleased to find at the close of the book

that his story is only half told, and that if spared he will treat us to the rest at a convenient opportunity. Let us hope, therefore, that he may be so spared. With the pleasant garrulity which is often characteristic of men of years and experience, the author tells us how he procured his first situation in a wholesale warehouse; how he was 'sold' in the matter of a legacy; how he gradually progressed; how he did not like his 'first Sunday dinner' when he became a commercial traveller, owing to the hilarity of his companions and the cost of the entertainment; how he went to Australia and made some thousands of pounds by purchasing 'nuggets;' and how he went there again, and lost a lot of money, not only of his own but of a friend who had entrusted him with £100 worth of goods; how he visited New Zealand, after scampering about Australia on his second visit; and how he wrote tragedies on his voyage home, we presume as a kind of counterpoise to the farce of his failure in a commercial point of view. At length, however, the author comes to the last page of his work before he has by any means arrived at the end of his story, and we therefore hope that he may be spared to fulfil the promise he holds out of another volume, detailing his further adventures, which, we have no doubt, will be marked by the same interesting narrative, and the same sound practical advice which distinguish the extremely interesting work now under notice."

From the "DAILY NEWS," 21st April, 1862.

"A pleasantly told history of the adventures of a youth in London, showing how he struggled with poverty and temptation, and succeeded in attaining to a position of respectability by good conduct. The work purports to be an autobiography, and the author promises to continue it at some future period. We therefore reserve our opinion of it until it is completed. The portion before us is written in a sensible and manly style, without any exaggeration, and leaves a very vivid impression upon the mind."

From the "ATLAS," 19th April, 1862.

"How shall we designate the volume before us? It is not, in any sense of the word, a novel; it is too diffuse to be exactly a tale; it has too much of the tale element to be called an autobiography. It may be fitly described as a guide for youth illustrated by the experience of the author. It is perfectly true that any attempt to put old heads on young

shoulders, is sure to fail ; but it is not less true that such a book as 'Number One' may prevent a youth from wrongdoing, by giving him a little mature advice.

"Frank is the son of a rich merchant who has an aversion to commerce, and, naturally enough, comes to grief, and leaves his son no inheritance except a large share of the paternal pride. Frank, though penniless, refused to accept a situation in his native town, because he did not choose to serve where his father had commanded. He came to London with some letters of introduction to merchants, and to a minister of State, the latter having been greatly obliged to Frank's father for assistance in electioneering matters. The merchants held out no hopes, and the minister promised and did not perform. Meantime, Frank left the home provided for him by Honest John, an old servant of his father's, and saw London life with a country friend who borrowed from Frank his last money and omitted to repay the inconvenient loan. Frank, however, was plucky, and would not allow Dame Fortune to gain the victory. He walked about London seeking employment, obtained a situation in a warehouse, rose rapidly, and was on the high way to fortune and independence. In crept ambition, and a desire to become an author. A volume of poems fell still-born from the press. Frank then 'took to the road;' that is, became a commercial traveller, and we wish that the whole fraternity would read, learn, and inwardly ponder the remarks of our author upon the life of commercials. Frank finally relinquished the pursuit of commerce, and went to Australia, mainly for the purpose of writing a book about the distant land of gold. He made some money by barter, and determined to make another voyage to realize some more money. The second voyage was a failure, and on his return home, Frank got up an entertainment which promised to be a success, but which he was obliged to relinquish on account of ill-health. The resource then was authorship, but even with royal patronage, it does not seem to have been a very lucrative profession. The next change was becoming secretary to —, which 'placed him in personal contact and communication with a large number of the most distinguished personages in the United Kingdom, from the highest downward.' If the author's life is spared, we are promised a continuation of the work.

"One of the lessons to be gleaned from this volume is, that we ought to seek no change of occupation, but rather to do with all our might, whatever our hands find to do ; and that it is absurd to attempt the career of an author unless specially

endowed with the special talents necessary for authorship. Not that we mean to infer our author is unfitted for the career of authorship, for he portrays character with considerable power and exactitude. 'Number One; or, the Way of the World' is, in many respects, worthy of hearty commendation."

From the "BRITISH QUARTERLY," July, 1862.

"One cannot well read this author's preface without becoming somewhat doubtful and prejudiced with regard to his book, nor read his book without coming to the conclusion that the preface is the least pleasing part of it. According to his own account, he is the son of a person of considerable local influence, who cultivated that influence at the expense of his business, and who left his son almost a beggar accordingly. Orphaned and fifteen Frank came up to London, and came in a state of both positive and comparative viridity, which is not refreshing but only irritating to contemplate, he found, however, as others have found, that the true stuff moderately backed can at length force recognition. Mercantile skill and knowledge did not satisfy him, and he dabbled, not in the stocks, but in authorship. He next tried 'the road,' but still mentally in possession of much of his former juvenility, or as less hard-hearted persons might describe it, his simplicity of character. By-and-by, we accompany him to Australia, take a trip to New Zealand, and then come home again. There is more sorrow, and deeper than all preceding sorrow, more literature, and such mingling of the sweet and bitter of this life as is not uncommon in it.

"The religion of the book instead of continuing to offend, as at first, persuades us before long into the conviction of its reality and depth. The experiences are autobiographical, and the sketches are taken from histories, incidents, and persons with which Mr. Foster is personally familiar. Perhaps, there are none to whom the book is more likely to be useful than to young men coming to London to seek situations and push their fortunes."

From the "ENGLISH NEWS," 5th May, 1862.

"Goldsmith, in his 'Vicar of Wakefield,' exhibited a simplicity which had few dealings with the world, and in those dealings was fairly outwitted. Frank Foster gives us the simplicity of a youth whose course is in and amidst all species of pretentious assumptions and studied deceptions, and an

extraordinary interest fastens on the reader as he follows the unsuspecting and wondering and trusting youth up to manhood. The work is written in easy, flowing, almost conversational style, the individuality of the characters introduced is preserved, and there is a disclosure of the innermost minds of these characters, each on its own selfish path and bent. In this work the reader is granted a microscopic view of life in multifarious forms, which he may frequently have himself encountered yet failed to understand. There are some fine lights and shades in these *tableaux of existence*, connected by the thread of the hero's fortunes and misfortunes. The work is having a rapid run."

From the "SUNDAY TEACHERS' TREASURY," July, 1862.

"A series of life sketches drawn very graphically; illustrating the duty and importance of self-reliance. It is quite a *young man's* book, and will be read with interest by young men who have come to town to push their way in our metropolitan life. The author has given us so many incidents of his own history that we feel, after reading them, as if he were a personal friend, and are inclined to say, 'Go on, Frank, and tell us more.' The account of the commercial life of 'Messrs. Fountain, Pillar, and Branch,' takes us behind the scenes of a 'wholesale' house. 'Honest John's' character pleases us, but we think he might have left a different legacy. Mr. Foster's recollections of some youths who, self-aided, have risen to eminence will stimulate, we trust, many young readers to shape out for themselves a not undistinguished course; as well as exhibit the advantages of Young Men's Societies."

From the "WINDSOR AND ETON EXPRESS,"
17th May, 1862.

"Having proved his capacity to instruct and interest the public by the production of fifteen literary works, some of which have attained a degree of popularity not always accorded even to the most meritorious attempts, while all are written in a style well calculated to entertain, and at the same time to inculcate lessons of practical wisdom, morality, and religion: having in all these volumes studiously kept *self*, or, as he would say, 'Number One,' in the background, we think it will be admitted that in this, his sixteenth production, the author may adopt his own career in life as the basis of a story and the inferences deducible therefrom, without rendering

himself liable to the imputation either of egotism or of vanity. Frank Foster is an author well known to English readers, and his works have been extensively circulated, and nearly all of them greatly appreciated; but we doubt whether one of them deserves to be more highly valued than the present, on account of the accuracy and fidelity with which real life is portrayed, and the searching, scrutinizing keenness of observation with which the hopes, fears, and motives generally influencing mankind are laid bare. The writer informs his readers that the groundwork of his narrative, or rather series of narratives, is founded upon fact; but really, had he not volunteered the statement, the work bears internal evidence that such is the case. Although the incidents occurring in the course of Frank Foster's career do not present the food for unnatural excitement found in the pages of exciting novels (the sole object of the writers of which seems to be that of administering to the gratification of readers afflicted with morbid imaginations), the various vicissitudes occurring are often of a remarkable character. Not only are they fully consistent with probability, but they are of a kind which, if not personally experienced by many readers, must have been observed by them, as having occurred in the struggles through life of some relative, friend, or acquaintance. Frank was the only son of one who may be described as an 'influential elector' in a provincial borough, enjoying the privilege of sending a representative to the Commons House of Parliament. Frank speaks of his father in terms of the deepest affection, but he seems to have been a gentleman who, to a great extent, neglected the old and established mercantile business inherited from his ancestors for the purpose of taking a prominent part in local public affairs. He was, in fact, the leading supporter and the 'right hand man' of the noble lord who represented the town. While the author was yet a stripling his parent's death occurred. As affecting Frank's prospects, this was indeed a serious event. When the affairs of the 'house of long standing' were wound up, it was found that, although the assets were sufficient to meet all liabilities, to the astonishment of the gossiping public (excepting those who were 'very knowing' after the event) the humoured and indulged son's inheritance was reduced to proportions quite insignificant. What could be done under the circumstances? A mere clerkship in his native town as offered him by one of his late father's friends was out of the question—quite beneath the notions of dignity which had been impressed upon his mind. Surely, something better could be obtained. The noble lord, of whose committee Frank's father was the permanent

chairman, and through whose instrumentality mainly he, at each successive election, occupied so proud a position on the poll, would do something for the son. To London Frank accordingly went. His first interview with his supposed patron, the receipt of the official letter that his name was down upon 'the list,' his expectations and disappointments, and final failure in this direction, are told in a very characteristic manner. Nor is the narration of the interviews with 'Honest John,' an old and faithful servant of his late father, and his encounter with the suspicious and cantankerous Mrs. Pepper, the lodging-house keeper, less pregnant with interest. The trials met and difficulties overcome before he obtained his first mercantile situation in the eminent and old-established firm of Fountain, Pillar, and Branch are portrayed in a style true to life. After the hardships undergone, he viewed this period as a most joyous era in his existence. His success was beyond expectation. He was promoted, and attained a *locus standi* in the house in a shorter time than he could have anticipated. Frank then comes to his first serious mistake in life. Two of the chief men in the employment of the firm, the amount of whose remuneration was such as can only be given by our wealthy merchant princes, became dissatisfied because they were not admitted into partnership. Joined by a 'retailer,' who thought it was time he should attain to the 'wholesale' dignity, they determined upon starting a firm in the same line of business as the old. Allured by plausible promises Frank, in an evil hour, was induced to abandon his patrons, and true friends in the hour of need, and to occupy a post in the new but very short-lived firm of Reckless, Venture, and Bounce. The career of this remarkable establishment having been brought to an abrupt termination, our author (having declined an offer to return to the old firm) took to the road. Our space will not permit us even to notice the details, so well related, touching the commercial room, the 'little legacy,' the subsequent voyages to Australia, the chapter on the 'blessings of affliction,' and the varied experiences of the author. Let it suffice to say that the book is one out of which much may be learnt. It is one which may be safely recommended to the perusal of youth, while those of more mature years may glean many valuable hints from its pages."

From the "EXETER FLYING POST," 7th May, 1862.

"This book is an autobiography in disguise. It is the story of the life of a man who has read much, written many books

which other people have read, seen a great deal of the world and its ways, and now at the close of a long and active life sits down quietly in his metropolitan suburban villa, at slippered ease, to tell the world his 'experiences.' Such a work cannot fail to be interesting, and the style in which it is written is such that few who run their eyes through the opening pages will be inclined to lay down the work till they have traced the writer through all his wandering paths. The origin of the work, as it is explained by Frank Foster himself, will give a better idea of the object in view than any critical description :—' One day—after a long season of repose—when the author was quietly turning over the pages of his own diary, the following question suddenly presented itself to the mind of the writer :—' Where shall I find a subject, *founded on fact*, with a greater variety of incident than is here recorded, or where look for a more eventful life than that of the recorder ?' The answer was—' I know not.' And so after a private discussion between self and ditto, the author sat down to the task of telling the world ' many of the writer's errors in the way of the world,'—the story of his boyhood, youth and manhood, and this story certainly justifies the motto affixed to the first page :—' One man in his time plays many parts.' A good idea of Frank Foster's style may be gathered from the following passage on authorship :—' In a monetary point of view, authorship is, perhaps, more precarious than any other profession, whether scientific or commercial. A merchant or shopkeeper generally finds his business and his income increase with his years. Having, in the spring of his career, worked hard to establish the one, he is enabled, during the summer or autumn of life, to take his repose in the enjoyment of the other. But the stock-in-trade—the brains—of an author cannot, after this fashion, be drawn on or made a bank in the absence or declining years of the proprietor. The revenue arising from literary property cannot be made continuous, except through a regular supply of stock from the mental store of the proprietor. Articles from the hands of a deputy fail to satisfy customers who expect to have their tables furnished direct from the ' fountain head.' Work, work, work ; there is nothing but work for an author. Whatever may be conveyed to the lofty chambers of his brain from the literary garners of brother authors, or however much he may be indebted to other people for materials with which to shape new ideas, his own mill must be kept continually going, in order to supply him with daily bread therefrom. Yet, there are a few exceptional cases, in which the work of an author becomes like the business of a shop or

warehouse that may be conducted without the personal superintendence of the original founder. But a work of this kind is usually of a commercial character, while its bearings on some important branch or branches of commerce impart to it a permanent value. In pen-ink-and-paper property there is nothing that bears so near a relationship to a sound banking establishment as a standard work of reference. In its commercial or monetary value, would not the most celebrated or intellectual book that was ever written fall into utter insignificance by side of the *London Directory*?' We have little doubt that those who read this work will gladly welcome the continuation which the author promises in a characteristic note at the close of the volume:—'Note.—Should the author's life be spared, this work will be continued.' If the public are as much pleased with *Number One* as the author himself plainly tells us he is, this will be a very popular book."

From the "WAKEFIELD JOURNAL," 2nd May, 1862.

"This is a volume containing 460 pages, and very neatly got up. It is written to instruct the young and struggling in the way of the world, and the moral intended to be conveyed is, that to be successful a man—or boy—must look mainly to *number one*, that is to himself. It is written in a light and pleasing style, and we venture to say that out of every dozen people taking it up, ten of these will read it to the end. The author in his short preface informs us 'that the ground work of the following pages may be regarded as a *fact*. These pages reveal many of the writer's errors in the way of the world—not *all*. Should the present feeble reflection of such errors prove a light by which some brother traveller or travellers may avoid similar mistakes in life, the simple knowledge of that fact will amply repay' him. This kindly feeling the author fully carries out, and we think with success. We will not attempt to give a sketch of the work—it is too large for that; but heartily commend it to the public, leaving the reader to judge of it for himself."

From the "BRADFORD OBSERVER," 24th April, 1862.

"The reader is asked to believe that the book is the first instalment of his own history by an old author. The writer is assuredly accustomed to write for publication, that we learn from many indications, but that he is an old author we scarcely believe. The buoyancy of youth is legibly impressed

on every page. But to give up vain guesses as to the writer's age, &c., let us glance at what he has given us, and judge his pretensions by their fruits. Whoever the writer may be he writes mostly from personal experience. The groundwork is fact, the embellishments are fancy. The book is not encumbered with a plot, for which we like it all the better. The boy Frank is introduced as the son of the proprietor of a commercial house of long standing, and great respectability. Frank's father, however, has sacrificed the merchant to the politician, and on his death the old house became bankrupt. Frank, a penniless orphan, goes out into the world to seek his fortune at the critical age of fifteen. In London, whither he bends his course, he meets with 'Honest John,' a respectable religious person, that had been long in the service of his father. Honest John teaches the boy in a quaint manner the ways of the world, and tells him that if he wishes for advancement, he should trust to *number one*, that is himself. Honest John and his adopted child, Amy, are the most pleasant characters in the book. The old man with his shrewed worldly advice, and simple religious faith, is vividly portrayed. Frank does not heed the good counsels of his host, and he throws himself headlong into a round of giddy pleasures. Thereupon disappointments follow, and he vows amendment. The amendment is only partial, but he moralizes so entertainingly on hopes and disappointments, the advantages of being friendless, and topics of a similar nature, that we cannot be angry with him for having been a little foolish. Frank, after a running acquaintance with many callings and pursuits, becomes an author. Honest John dies, and leaves Frank 'a little legacy,' and the protectorship of Amy. The young lady does not think very highly of her young guardian, and therefore puts herself under the more efficient protection of a husband. The 'little legacy,' the name of which for some time gained friends and patronage for Frank, turns out to be nothing more than a little Bible. Frank did not much improve the occasion. As an author, a commercial traveller, and a wanderer in Australia and New Zealand, Frank appears in the remaining chapters. The writer has a flexible style. He describes with freshness and vigour and philosophizes sparkingly and soundly on the vicissitudes of life, and the workings of passions. The horizon of his vision is not extensive, but within prescribed limits nothing escapes his observation. The book is as readable as a novel with an intricate plot, and contains a store of etchings and remarks on the way of the world, that could not be compressed in a novel of any dimensions. We trust that

volume one will soon be followed by volume two, as the author half promises."

From the "WELLINGTON WEEKLY NEWS,"
3rd July, 1862.

"We never remember having read a work detailing incidents of real life so cleverly and interestingly told as in 'Number One; or, the Way of the World.' Many of its chapters are equal to any that ever came from the pen of *Dickens*, and afford instruction as well as entertainment, it will be equally enjoyed by the grave, as well as the gay—is one of the best books we have met with for the Family Circle, or the Public Reading Room."

From the "BRISTOL MERCURY," 3rd May, 1862.

"This book is by the author of 'Sketches of Commercial Life,' a work which some few years ago excited considerable attention amongst the 'commercial men' of the kingdom from the freedom with which it commented upon the usages in vogue amongst that class. The present volume is of a more pretending character, and the groundwork of it, the writer states, is founded on fact, the title of 'Number One,' and the two branches into which it is divided, viz., 'the number ones that signify selfishness and all that is bad; and the number ones that signify independence, charitableness, and all that is good,' being well illustrated in the course of the narrative by the different characters introduced, some of whom are patterns of that religious purpose and business integrity which are the pillars of social life, while others are seen 'going to the bad' through devotion to 'number one' in its selfish and debasing sense. Frank Foster, who tells his life-story (or a portion of it, for the work is intended to be continued) is early thrown upon his own resources by the death of his father, a respectable but thriftless man; he goes to London, trusting to 'five letters of recommendation to first-class men of business,' but soon finds what reeds such things are to depend upon, and, after beating about in quest of employment for some time in the great metropolis, he is only too glad to begin at the very bottom of the ladder in the great wholesale warehouse of Messrs. Fountain, Pillar, and Branch. His early struggles, onward progress, and associates while in this establishment, are graphically described. Subsequently he is seduced away from the old firm to a flash concern, which becomes bankrupt; then he dabbles

in authorship, takes to the road as a commercial man, and, quitting that, he is found speculating, with eventually dubious success, at the Antipodes. The book is written with simplicity, and possesses variety, together with that interest which attends the delineation of life-scenes, though at times the reader may have to complain of too great diffuseness. We extract the following passage, narrating the rise and downfall of Reckless, Venture, and Bounce, who thought they were going to upset the old-established firm of Fountain, Pillar, and Branch."

From the "ULVERTON ADVERTISER," 5th June, 1862.

"This is a species of autobiography. How much of fact or how much of fiction there may be in it, we cannot tell; but the work has the air of earnestness about it; and the influences of real life play upon it from first to last. It is, moreover, well written, and it will be found, on perusal, to be worth more than the couple of leisure hours which it will pleasantly beguile. We are given to understand that it is the first instalment of a work to be completed in two parts; and we candidly confess that we have been so much interested in the first part as to render us desirous of seeing the second."

From the "BRIGHTON GAZETTE," 22nd May, 1862.

"This work is worthy of high commendation, not less for its interest as a narrative, than for the great practical utility, especially to the young, of the lessons it inculcates. The writer, an old author, searching abroad in the regions of fancy for further literary labor, is reminded by an old diary of the eventualities of his own career, and reversing the telescope, concentrates his gaze upon nearer and more definite objects, telling us of 'number one,' and the experiences he has purchased of the 'way of the world.' 'Where,' he asks, 'shall I find a subject, founded on fact, with a greater variety of incidents than is here recorded, or where look for a more eventful life than that of the recorder?' The work which follows, bears testimony to the reasonableness of the enquiry. Whilst the incidents, from their interest, provoke the commendation that the work is 'as good as a novel,' the fact that they are the record of the actual experiences of one, who, having weathered the storm, is anxious to advise others how they may avoid shipwreck, renders the work more profitable than can be any novel. There is an air of thorough genuineness pervading the work. The meretricious allurements of fiction are discarded,

unnecessary ornamentation is avoided, and the narrative is couched in language, thoroughly simple, yet withal graceful. Though descanting upon 'the way of the world,' the author does not show a tendency to worldliness, in the ordinary acceptation of the term; on the contrary, a true spirit of morality, and even of piety, frequently becomes apparent. The tale is one of an orphan boy, thrown upon his resources in the great metropolis; and his struggles for subsistence, his commercial career, his literary attainments, and his experiences of life in the Antipodes, constitute the interest of the volume. One of the characters, described as 'Honest John,' is a very beautiful piece of portraiture."

From the "DERBYSHIRE ADVERTISER," 6th June, 1862.

"Although the euphonious name of the author, 'Frank Forter,' is without doubt, a *nom de guerre*, still we are assured that the ground work of these pages may be regarded as *fact*, and the narrative reveals many of the writer's errors in the 'way of the world,' which are stated in a most effective manner. In about a score chapters, extending over nearly 500 pages of good print, written in a free and clever style—for our author is by no means an unpractised hand at composition—we have a most readable and instructive volume—a book that should be perused by all our young men, and even youths in their teens, who have to make their 'way' in 'the world' by dint of application and energy in business pursuits. In the absence of everything like improbability, our author sketches his own career from boyhood, when left an orphan, through the various stages of commerce and adventure in this country and in Australia—experiences which are, perhaps, somewhat more diversified than fall to the lot of many—until somewhere about the meridian of life we find him an invalid, compelled to retire into the comparative quietude of literary labor, and recording in a series of most instructive lessons, what he had once been told in youth, but had refused to heed, that 'in every station of society, whether in social, commercial, or political life, NUMBER ONE is still the leading feature in THE WAY OF THE WORLD.' The incidents of life which are here so graphically described serve to illustrate this truism in a remarkable degree, and to demonstrate the selfish pride of human nature unaffected by the higher and holier influences of true religion. But readers in general—those who seek amusement or excitement merely in what they read, will not only be interested with *Number One*, it will also prove ser-

viceable to thoughtful and religious people as showing up the 'way of the world' in numerous examples. Christian teachers and philosophers will sympathize with the writer in the views set forth at the end of the work, as to the true source of inward satisfaction, and that genuine peace of mind which the author himself at last happily experiences. The observations and reflections to which we refer will be found very refreshing to contemplate, and suggest, in a striking manner, the importance of basing all operations for this world and the next on the Bible as the Word of God, which is now found to be by the author as an anchor of the soul. We heartily commend Mr. Foster's volume to our readers, and to young people especially. We trust, where it may be considered too expensive for individual purchase, it will find its way to the libraries of our Young Men's Christian Associations and similar institutions. We hope also the author's life may be spared so that, as intimated, he may continue the work by giving additional experiences of 'the way of the world' on some future occasion."

From the "NEWCASTLE GUARDIAN," 26th April, 1862.

"This is the story of a life, fruitful in incident and rich in the lessons of experience. The author, who has assumed the *nom de plume* of Frank Foster, has already (as he tells us in the preface), given to the world fifteen volumes; after a long season of repose—while quietly turning over the pages of his own diary—it occurred to him that therein were materials amply sufficient, in their recital, to interest the public, and to this mental cogitation we are indebted for the production of the present volume. The narrative is founded on fact, but the writer does not pledge himself to literal exactitude, and indeed this would have materially militated against the interest of the work, whilst it is not at all necessary as an element of its moral value. On dipping into the contents we become at once linked in sympathy with the narrator, and anxious to follow his fortunes whithersoever they may lead us. The volume opens with Frank as an orphan. His father held an influential position in a borough which enjoys the privilege of returning a member to Parliament and did good service to a noble lord as chairman of his election committee. On the death of that parent and the change in his own circumstances—for we are told that 'the merchant had been sacrificed to the politician; the fruitful gain arising from commerce had been neglected for the fruitless reputation of the platform, or the worse than fruitless smiles of political courtiers'—our young

hero, then in his teens, sought the interest of the lord whom his father had served to obtain him a government situation. The details of this bootless errand are very graphically described. Failing in this he turned his attention to commerce, and after many failures and straits he at last succeeded in gaining a junior's place in a wholesale drapery establishment. From thence he passed to the road, and as 'a commercial' he appears to have made many notes of the doings of that intelligent, and in those days, convivial fraternity. 'A Sunday spent at Margate,' with a champagne dinner, is perhaps one of the most amusing episodes narrated. Authorship next engaged his attention; poetry, we find in his case, as in that of many others, did not sell, and he discovered that matters of fact in literature did for him the best. This is not always so, but he confesses that he has no skill in novel writing, and hence in that sometimes lucrative branch of letters he did not succeed. Desiring change of scene and occupation he set out for Australia, and there first found nuggets and then lost them—all his ventures and their result being pretty minutely described. On the voyage he met with a ministering angel, a scion of the nobility who chose to adopt the modest patronymic of Miss Grace, and her good actions are very amply set forth in one of the chapters. We thought when we lighted on this lovely character that as we had not previously heard of Mrs. Foster this would be the jewel, but were rather provokingly disappointed on this head. It seems, however, that the author is married, and has three children, but as to his family history he is silent. Since his return from Australia, and indeed there, Mr. Foster has followed the career of a public lecturer. An attempt to tread somewhat in the track of Albert Smith was a failure, and he is now, and has been for the last twelve months, amanuensis or secretary to a distinguished individual which places him in personal contact and communication with a large number of the most influential personages, 'from the highest downward.' His experience in the upper circles of society is not encouraging, for it confirms a declaration made by one of his early friends whom he calls 'Honest John,' that 'in every station of society, whether in social, commercial, or political life, Number One is still the leading feature in The Way of the World.' We are sorry to find the author is out of health—indeed he informs us that he is suffering from a pulmonary affection, of which he is not likely to recover; moreover, heavier, far heavier than the worldly losses of an entire life, a domestic blight has fallen upon his household, which has deprived him of 'one half of his own heart;' and these painful circumstances give a deep tone of melancholy to the closing

pages of the volume. We think the author's disclosures likely to be, in many ways, useful, especially to those who are just entering upon manhood. They teach the needful lesson of self-reliance, and exhibit in a forcible manner the advantages of industry, prudence, and good conduct. Even his own misfortunes are clearly traceable to the lack of one at least of these requisites to combined honor and success. The narrative is pervaded throughout by a religious spirit, and although certain kinds of professors are handled with a sarcasm which partakes somewhat of bitterness and may have been barbed by disappointment, yet a distinction is very carefully drawn between the extrinsic and the vital, the simulated and the real. We can cordially recommend 'Number One,' both for domestic circle, and the Public Reading Room or Institute."

From the "LIVERPOOL COURIER," 12th April, 1862.

"'Books are long, and life is short!' may be the sorrowing exclamation of many a journalist who wishes to keep abreast with the tide of new publications. At a period when topics of popular interest are abundant, it is doubtless a duty that authors owe to the public to be brief and compendious, and such a policy of neighbourly accommodation works well in the long run for those who adopt it. Readers will always be found for a volume of two hundred pages who shrink from one of five. If Mr. A. has given us a survey of British Columbia, and Mr. B. has little to add to what has been told by his predecessor, why should the latter insist on repeating, in different phraseology, all that we have heard before as an indispensable accompaniment to his own modicum of information? It is really unfair to accuse the gentler sex of talking most when they have nothing to say, while those who should prove themselves the masters of thought are but the slaves of verbosity.

"The writer of this professed autobiography, Mr. Frank Foster, as he is pleased to call himself, is by no means so egregious an offender in this respect as some *littérateurs* of higher reputation. It has often been observed that the life of *any* man, could it be ably and faithfully recorded by himself, would furnish some interesting themes for disquisition. The present writer is honest enough to avow some of his follies and his failures, and these afford profitable instruction, especially to young men who have to make their way in the world. In some particulars, however, he must have done well to present the rough surface of literal facts, rather than the flimsy veneer of fiction. A writer who bends and strains incidents to subserve a preconceived 'moral' is pretty sure of a failure. Ac-

cording to Mr. Foster's own showing, 'number one' is very far from being the leading feature in 'the way of the world,' and we may gather plentiful examples of folly from the carelessly unselfish as well as from the covetously self-seeking. If a wandering and ultimately reclaimed fellow-pilgrim will tell the plain story of his own journey, we will thank him for it, and supply the 'improvement' ourselves. As Mr. Foster promises another volume in continuation of the one before us, he may possibly avail himself of our friendly advice.

"Whatever scope this narrative may afford for criticism, no impartial reader can overlook the good purpose of the author, and the healthful tendency of his views of life. His adventures are varied, if not remarkably novel or exciting; but the chief merit of the record is in the principles of action that it suggests, which are those of vital religion and practical beneficence."

From the "LEEDS INTELLIGENCER," 19th April, 1862.

"In a very enticing and readable looking volume the author gives, as the work of a veteran writer, what seems to be a veritable autobiography. Not that he professes it be so in reality; for, in his preface, he vouches only for the 'ground-work' of his narrative, as entitled to be regarded as 'fact,' revealing 'many of the writer's errors in the WAY OF THE WORLD—not all.' A natural and truth-like character, however, pervades the story, the incidents of which in no respect transgress the bounds of ordinary probability, though perhaps a little arrangement and invention for the purpose of conveying some lesson or opinion of the author may be discovered. The scene in which the friendless youth learns from his lordship's butler the 'Way of the World' among statesmen and official personages in evading direct refusals to applicants for appointments is probably an invented fact, but, as the Italian proverb says, if not true, it is well devised. In sketching his own life under the designation of 'Number One,' the author well describes the selfishness and sensitiveness mingled with many of the better qualities of youth; and these, whether true of the particular individual who describes himself or not, are ten thousand times true in the daily life of young men. The author's style is simple and unpretending, without claim to any high literary character, but it is clear and intelligible; and if his range of ideas is not very large nor his knowledge very extensive and varied, his reflections are always sound and his practical experience supplies ample stores of useful suggestion as well as of interesting narrative. Indeed, the book is very pleasant to read, and, without any of the morbid excite-

ment of an involved plot or thrilling incidents, beguiles the reader from chapter to chapter in agreeable and wholesome enjoyment, and rewards him with good lessons in the morals of worldly prudence, as well as those of a higher and holier character. We can very truly say we hope the intimation at the end of the volume, promising a continuation of the work if the author's life should be spared, will be fulfilled by the appearance of volume two, &c., in due time."

From the "CHELTENHAM JOURNAL," 3rd May, 1862.

"The author of this volume, in his preface, describes it as 'unpretending,'—a remark which probably few persons who simply take note of its bulk will be inclined to endorse, seeing that it contains no less than 460 octavo pages. A careful perusal of its contents will, however, clearly show that though the size of the work precludes it from *not* claiming distinction, there is at the same time nothing at all about it that can be regarded as pretentious or unreal. Its object apparently is to demonstrate to those who have not become familiar with 'the way of the world,' how little there is in it of liberality and self-sacrifice, and how the ruling principle—and main-spring, as it were, of the actions—of the great majority of humanity is purely self. It is in fact the veritable biography of a man who has fought with considerable energy the up-hill battle of life, and who, in doing so has become acquainted with a considerable number of its varied and most striking phases. It professes to be founded on entries in the writer's own diary, and embraces a series of vivid and entertaining sketches which, though palpably embellished for the purpose of rendering them more acceptable to the reader, have each been 'founded on a living reality.' The whole story is characterised by an appearance of truthfulness, and the several incidents are related in an artless and unassuming manner. The narrative is copiously interspersed with useful suggestions and moral lessons, all of which afford good ground for private reflection. We can cordially recommend it as a highly readable and entertaining volume, and we hope that its success will be such as to justify the author in issuing the sequel which he promises hereafter to publish, if his life should be spared."

From the "BRIGHTON HERALD," 26th April, 1862.

"In this age of sensational scenes, sensational dramas, and last, though not least, sensational novels, in which the feelings are perpetually on the rack, it is some relief to peruse the

pages of such a book as we have now under review. It is, in fact, an antidote to the poisonous doses which have been administered to the novel-reading public so long, and well calculated to work a radical cure. The book is a simple record of an author's life-experience from boyhood to the prime of life. It is written in good plain English, unalloyed by French words and French phrases, which are now too often introduced into our mother-tongue for no other purpose than that of vain display or to show the deficiency not only of the author's taste, but of the language he professes to know. The author of *Number One* has passed through the world with his eyes wide open, and he graphically describes the scenes he has witnessed. The life of an author is often said to be without events; but such was not the life of Frank Foster. Left an orphan at the critical age of fifteen, friendless and without means, he journeyed to London, became an inmate of the house of 'Honest John,' formerly an upright servant of his father, and one of the finest characters in the whole book. Here he commits his first error, in leaving this humble abode, and taking lodgings with a Mrs. Pepper,—such a landlady! one of the true London type, too well known to many a penniless youth in the metropolis. After many trials and difficulties, and severe pinchings from hunger, this recipient of much evil, yet of more good, obtains a situation in the commercial house of Fountain, Pillar, and Branch, and rises rapidly, through many stirring events, to be a salesman with £200 a year; loses his best friend, Honest John, who leaves him a legacy, enclosed in a small parcel not to be opened till six months after his decease; ceases to be a member of the firm of Fountain & Co.; engages in another, which becomes bankrupt; turns commercial traveller and author; leaves England for the Antipodes in the double capacity of author and merchant—has successes and failures; returns to England, embarks in a literary speculation, is stricken down in the moment of success by ill health, and, after enduring much suffering, writes the present volume.

“Such are a few of the leading events of *Number One*, which we can heartily recommend to the perusal of our readers, containing as it does much practical good sense, wisdom, taste, and feeling, from the reading of which every one must rise a wiser and a better being. It is a book well calculated to raise the moral tone of society; and, though severe, it is just in its condemnation of the trashy and vitiated literature of third-rate authors of the present day. We hope the author may be spared to complete the task he has so ably commenced, and that *Number Two* may follow in its wake.”

From the "LIVERPOOL ALBION," 28th April, 1862.

"Young men of erratic tendencies, who are just entering life, may read this work with great advantage. The author traces his life from the time when as a raw country lad, devoid of experience of the world, he went to London in search of employment, and underwent the trials which such adventurers do. His experiences, social and mercantile, are of sterling interest. We learn from his work how the business of London warehouses is conducted—the advantages old-established and soundly-conducted concerns have over more flashy ones; the drawbacks attached to the life of a commercial traveller; and, lastly, how enterprises, founded on a sound basis, may succeed. But we also learn from his experiences, that business requires devotion, and that if inclination pulls one end, and duty another, ruin must be the ultimate result."

From the "LEICESTER ADVERTISER," 10th May, 1862.

"From the days of Rousseau autobiography has been growing in favour among writers as well as readers. The incidents of the life of almost every individual are sufficient in number to furnish forth the materials of a romance; and, if well and truthfully narrated, are capable of forming a book which can scarcely fail of securing the attention of those whose interest it endeavours to excite. As the tenor of every life varies from all which have preceded, or are to follow it, assuming sufficient skill of the author in arranging the materials, the main quality necessary for success in autobiography is honesty; honesty, in the enlarged acceptation of the term, being the most difficult acquirement in this species of composition: for in the subject itself is to be found the greatest inducement to extenuate failings, to palliate wrong-doing, to excuse failure. In 'Number One; or, the Way of the World,' the writer's courage must have been severely tested, when he had to describe the step which led him from a prosperous mercantile position to the life-consuming toil of an author; this however is done frankly, and the change, though it can hardly be considered otherwise than a self-sacrifice, must have been—judging by the work before us—to the public benefit. Every one who takes up the work will be delighted with the description of the country lad's *naïveté* upon his entering upon a town life. His being cheated out of his money by his kind and dashing young companion; the portrait of his thoroughly London landlady, are well set forth in the narrative; but oh! his sad, ungrateful, treatment of honest John! His conduct at that point of his career makes

us feel that the heartless young scapegrace deserved all the troubles he subsequently met with ; but here lies the charm, and, we may add, the instructiveness of the book. Who has not passages in his life of which he feels utterly ashamed ? Perhaps the most touching portion of the biography is where the bewildered youth meets with his first situation in London. But, throughout, the book sparkles with incidents of vivid interest, containing in the narrative of the author's life innumerable lessons of wisdom invaluable to the young, who are sure to read through the short chapters into which the work is divided."

From the "LINCOLN MERCURY," 11th April, 1862.

"NUMBER ONE ; OR, THE WAY OF THE WORLD, a new work by Mr. Frank Foster (Simpkin and Co.), is an amusing and very instructive autobiography ; in which the author demonstrates the advantages of perseverance, and the value to him of the remembrance of an old nursery song with the refrain, "Try, try, try again." Left an orphan in early life, and almost penniless through the father's lack of interest in an old mercantile business to which he succeeded, Frank did what thousands of others have done—proceeded to London to seek his fortune. Armed with letters of introduction to five merchants, and an early promise of patronage from the M.P. of the borough where his father had been a magnate, he started on his mission full of hope, very speedily to find the inutility of depending upon others and the value of depending on one's self. When reduced to the brink of starvation a ray of sunshine burst upon him ; and having by this time, through the faithlessness of a friend and the advice of an old dependent, acquired a slight insight into the 'ways of the world,' he felt the necessity of caring for 'number one,' and so, on getting an appointment in a large mercantile establishment, by a rigid attention to duty he determined to retain it. In this he succeeded, and eventually reached a position alike honorable to himself and the house which he served. There is no great novelty in the sketch : the career is one which is common in every day life ; but the pleasant manner in which the story is told, the accurate sketches of the characters introduced, and the amusing little episodes with which the work is interwoven, render the volume a truly welcome one."

From the "STOCKPORT ADVERTISER," 11th April, 1862.

"The work before us is an elegantly-printed, tastefully-

bound, and thoroughly-entertaining volume of 460 pages, from the pen of an exceedingly facile and graceful writer, who had already presented fifteen volumes to the literary world, of great merit and talent. 'NUMBER ONE,' is not a novel, but an autobiography—nor is it based upon fiction, but founded upon fact. In his preface the author says:—'Although in his humble capacity as a literary labourer, he had been accustomed to the use of the modest yet mighty symbol of power to be found in the editorial '*we*,' the great and superlative '*I*' had never been pushed beyond the title-page of his own works. Let others decide whether time, situation, and circumstance, have justified the departure from this rule. The reader has only to be informed, before proceeding on his journey, that the groundwork of the following pages may be regarded as *fact*. Those pages reveal many of the writer's errors in the WAY OF THE WORLD—not *all*. Should the present feeble reflection of such errors prove a light by which some brother traveller or travellers may avoid similar mistakes in life, the simple knowledge of that fact will in itself amply reward the author.'

"Frank's chequered adventures, from his boyhood, an orphan of 15 years, to his manhood, are narrated with a vividness and brilliancy rarely equalled by the best or most popular novelists. Impelled by the deceptive and fatal spirit of pride, which is the ruin of thousands, Frank rejects a proffered situation in the place of his nativity, and makes his way to London, where, through the recommendations and intervention of influential friends of his late father, he succeeds in obtaining a situation, as clerk, in the warehouse of an eminent commercial firm. He gradually rises and rises, ambition leading him on, until a love of change impels him to give up his situation, for a better. He then tries his hand at authorship, experiencing alternate successes and reverses; eventually abandons his connection with commerce, and emigrates to Australia, just at the moment when the gold-fever was at its height. Having, after enduring many hardships, amassed a considerable sum of money, he returns to England, where, in unfruitful enterprises, his antipodean wealth is soon exhausted; whereupon he resolves to revisit Melbourne, bent on a money-hunting expedition, and subsequently visits New Zealand. His topographical descriptions of these places, and the narratives recorded of the vicissitudes of life at the diggings, are among the best pieces in the book. Frank again returns to England and home—becomes a successful public entertainer and author, until his health breaks down; and at this unfortunate juncture of affairs the volume closes. The narrative abounds with strange incidents, pleasant anecdotes, and valuable moral les-

sons ; indeed, every page is covered with sentences full of life—rich, inviting, clever, and beautiful. The reader will search in vain for aught that is dull or tedious, the interest of the story being sustained throughout. The writer's facility of illustration and description is marvellous. Knowledge, shrewdness, experience, and judgment, are admirably blended ; and, taking the book as a whole, we can confidently say that the like of it will not soon appear again, unless the success of 'NUMBER ONE' is such as to induce the author, (health permitted) to continue his autobiography in a companion-volume, which he evidently meditated when he penned the following sentences in his peroration :—'That human monster, Self, has at present been faintly shadowed rather than strongly marked. But recent notes on passing events will, I fear, compel me, in any future volume, to give a little more prominence to the principal figure—'NUMBER ONE.'

"Whoever peruses this book will, we are assured, earnestly desire a further intimacy with the clever writer, and a better acquaintance with the varied circumstances of his eventful life ; and, in taking our leave of the author, it is with the fervent hope soon to enjoy the happiness of a renewed acquaintance. Meanwhile, we heartily commend 'NUMBER ONE' to the patronage of all lovers of pure, wholesome, and refreshing literature, as a most desirable addition to their stock of *really readable books*."

From the "GLASGOW EXAMINER," 12th April, 1862.

"This volume might be termed the commencement of the autobiography of the author's life. He is one of those who in his turn 'plays many parts.' He has seen much of the world, and been an accurate and minute observer, and this handsome volume contains his earlier experiences. It is divided into eighteen chapters, which are full of stirring incident. If spared, the author proposes to issue additional volumes, and all who have perused the first will anxiously look for succeeding volumes. It has got an admirable frontispiece, in which a lodger in debt to his landlady is quietly removing his goods from his trunk when surprised by his landlady's entrance, who, with a look of astonishment says, 'Your not a packing up, young gentleman, are you ?' To which he coolly replies, 'Oh dear, no ; but as my box is to remain here till you are satisfied, I was just placing the contents in something like order.' The volume is beautifully got up, and will be a favorite with the reading public."

From the "SUNDERLAND TIMES," 12th April, 1862.

"This is the first instalment of an autobiographical story, founded on fact,—the latest example of a class of books against which many urge strong objections, on the plausible ground that you can never know how much or what is true in them and what fictitious. For our own part, we feel the force of the objection. We do not like lies and truths mixed. We delight in a good romance or novel, in which everything is true to nature or to conventional ideas, yet nothing positively true. Even a dry old annalist or chronicler's pages have wonderful charms for us, if he is a trustworthy authority, telling the naked truth, so far as he knew it. But your Psalmanazars, De Totts, Le Vaillants, Herman Melvilles and Du Chaillus, who write fiction under the garb of truth, we have less respect for than for Baron Munchausen, Lemuel Gulliver, or Peter Wilkins. The work we have under our eye, however, is the least objectionable of its class we ever saw. Indeed, the veil or varnish spread over the matters of fact narrated in it seems so thin and transparent as scarcely to be a disguise at all. The biography is substantially authentic; it bears the marks of genuineness on the face of it. And it was well worth writing. Few lives have been more eventful than that of 'Frank Foster,'—few that more correctly point a moral. We wish we could put this record of it into the hand of every young man about to enter on the great world, and persuade him that what is there written he will sooner or later find in all material points verified by his own experience, should he be placed in similar circumstances. We have not space to detail the contents, or even to give the heads of the eighteen chapters comprised in this volume of 460 pages,—chapters describing, with an easy flowing pen, the hopes and disappointments, lights and shadows, ups and downs, of a friendless penniless orphan from the country, in the English metropolis,—his difficult and humble introduction to the world of commerce,—his success there and the secret of his success,—his first essay at authorship,—his visit to the Antipodes,—his return to England,—the failure of his health,—his literary undertakings, successful and unsuccessful, &c., &c. There is instruction as well as entertainment in almost every page. The author, though he chooses to appear under an assumed name, is understood to be Mr. Frank Fowler, the author of 'Adrift,' a very successful book, of 'Southern Lights and Shadows,' a capital Australian sketch book, of several volumes of prose and verse, and of numerous articles in magazines and newspapers. The new Library Company, in St. James's Square,

London, which is to rival Mudie's, has secured him, we understand, as its secretary. That he is a man of great and varied talent, the fifteen volumes he had given to the world previous to issuing this 'Number One' demonstratively prove. But none of them have more solid claims to popularity than this. We wish him success in his new capacity."

From the "COVENTRY HERALD," 17th April, 1862.

"The author introduces himself to the public as one already well known in the literary world, and as the writer of 15 previous volumes. He devotes his 16th rather voluminous work to the history of his own experiences of the 'way of the world,' and he does so with an evidently earnest purpose to make them of service to others entering on the same career; and also we cannot avoid surmising, from the last few pages, he intends this work to be useful as an advertisement of certain of his other publications. Mr. Foster appears to have begun his career in life as an orphan lad of fifteen, sent to London with letters of introduction to business houses; and there are too many similarly struggling for a position and maintenance in the great world of the metropolis, for the experiences of one in the crowd not to excite a wide and real interest. As a commercial man and traveller with literary tastes and ambition in the back-ground, as an emigrant to Australia and New Zealand with partly literary and partly commercial views, as the author of a successful work, as he himself states, on the Australian Colonies; and finally, as a writer and lecturer who has secured an independence by his own exertions, Mr. Foster leads us pleasantly on to the end of his narrative, and his work is none the less likely to be popularly useful because the incidents and the mode of relating them and of improving upon them are of an ordinary kind."

From the "CARLISLE EXAMINER," 8th April, 1862.

"In the preface to this clever novel, the writer remarks that, 'an old author may sometimes experience less difficulty in illustrating a subject than in finding a suitable subject for illustration.' Pondering upon this truth, he seems to have come to the conclusion that he could find no subject, founded upon fact, with a greater variety of incidents than was presented by the eventful life of 'Number One;' and upon this substratum of fact he has constructed a spirited story, abounding with piquant scenes and vivid sketches. Thrown upon the world an orphan, he plunges into the whirlpool of London life,

where all individuality is lost. Here he goes through the usual alternations of hope and disappointment; but warned by failure, he pushes on his road, and perseverance is at length crowned with its never-failing reward. This is a bold outline of a career that is filled up with a ceaseless variety of stirring incident, of which the sprightly and humorous form no slight part. Nearly every page proclaims that Mr. Foster is a veteran and skilful writer, and an adept in telling a good story, which is at once the simplest and most difficult species of literary composition. We hope to meet with him again in a sphere so naturally his own."

From the "SUNDERLAND HERALD," 11th April, 1862.

"The author can hardly be congratulated on having adopted the most fitting of titles for a book which has evidently been written to serve a high and holy purpose. 'Number One' smacks of the slang of the streets, and is hardly in unison with the feelings of the same 'Frank Foster' who here declares, 'if by the grace of God I have at length discovered in his son Jesus Christ, the great and *only* source of real happiness, it is enough for me simply to record the fact.' But we cannot afford to fall out with the book for its title's sake, for there are few who will rise from its perusal that will not be ready to admit that out of such very slender materials as the career of a country lad, who, at the age of fifteen, goes up to London in search of a situation, and who, after encountering all the sickening disappointments which seem almost inseparable from such a step, he is ultimately successful, and rises step by step, until he becomes the country representative of a commercial firm—then the fortunate Australian trader, and anon the popular author,—there are few, we say, who will not readily accord to the author the credit of having constructed a very readable narrative out of materials remarkably common-place. The story, we are assured, is founded on facts, and, with the noble lesson the book teaches, it is an admirable volume to place in the hands of the young man who is about leaving home to look after 'Number One' in the highways and bye-ways of life."

From the "WESTERN TIMES," 24th May, 1862.

"The author of this 'no fiction' is well acquainted with the ways of the commercial world—knows it as only a native can. Hence we have good grounds for believing him when he informs us that his own diary—he being a commercial—furnishes the facts upon which the story based. We have here the

Number Ones that signify selfishness and all that is bad ; and the *Number Ones* that signify independence, charitableness, and all that is good. These bearings of the different kinds of Number One are powerfully illustrated in this work, and the warning signals are displayed on the line to deter thoughtless and fast young men from the road to ruin, and the successful fight which integrity and religious purpose may make against the foes to be met in the upward path. In business honorable and upright dealings, and their effects are seen in the firm of Fountain, Pillar, and Branch, and the contrary in that of Reckless, Venture, and Bounce—for whose ways and end we recommend the reader to NUMBER ONE."

From the "ABERDEEN FREE PRESS," 23rd May, 1862.

"This volume consists of autobiographical sketches 'founded on fact.' In what proportion fact and fiction are mingled together we do not know; nor is this of very great importance. The sketches are vivid and life-like, and the style is exceedingly lively and graphic. Mr. Foster goes back to the period of boyhood, and pictures forth the sanguine hopes, the difficulties and aspirations of that season of life with a felicitous skill and freshness, that will make 'Number One' be read with pleasure, while the lessons it conveys in the experiences of the narrator in his progress onward, are equally true with those derived from the most rigid adherence to fact. The present volume does not finish the work."

From the "JERSEY INDEPENDENT," 1st May, 1862.

"This is a story professing to be autobiographical, and we presume, is so, notwithstanding the veil—by no means impenetrable in some parts—under which the proper names of the persons mentioned are concealed. Whether the writer has mixed up any fiction with his facts, as a professional author whose opportunities have been such as to enable him to tell travellers' tales might be tempted to do, we do not know. We can only say that the *vraisemblance* to such events as might happen in the career, at least the early career, of thousands of English boys, is well maintained throughout. *Frank Foster*, the *nom de plume* of our author, was left an orphan at the age of dawning youth, came to London, like Dick Whittington and many more, to seek his fortune, committed some not very extraordinary or very culpable follies, and, as usual with lads, paid too little heed to the good advice of an elder and faithful friend who knew *the way of the world*; the unreflecting *Frank*

demonstrating, once again, the truth of the old adage that 'young folks *think* old folks fools, but old folks *know* young ones to be fools.' There is one portion of the story which can hardly have been embellished; the loneliness, the perils and the anxieties besetting a youth without friends and with a rapidly diminishing purse, who has the dreary mission of seeking employment in that great wilderness called London. Oxford Street is by no means the only metropolitan thoroughfare having a right to claim the appellation of 'stony-hearted'—so designated by the English opium-eater in the agony of his heart. *Frank Foster* has evidently had personal experience of the qualities of those least desirable of London acquaintances, the London landlady and the characters who benevolently (?) offer to find situations for young aspirants to their liking, for a consideration—paid in advance. The interior organization of a great commercial firm, 'Messrs. *Fountain, Pillar and Branch*,' is exceedingly well described; and, indeed, whether the author describes Life in a London lodging-house, in a metropolitan warehouse, on board an emigrant ship, in Melbourne—as Melbourne was at the outbreak of the gold fever, or the troubles of a young author, or the anxieties of a 'popular lecturer,' he writes as a man who has experienced what he described, and, therefore, is worth reading and his story is worth listening to. But when he drifts into politics, he is decidedly more 'at sea' than when in mid-ocean half-way to Australia. Perhaps there is too much moralizing in the book, which has consequently been unnecessarily extended to 460 pages, when some 300 might have comprised all the facts narrated and made a handier volume. To our thinking the 'moral' of an autobiography should be deducible from the facts narrated, and be evident enough without being written out and elaborated for the reader's instruction. With the character and tone of the moralizing we have no fault to find. We appreciate the author's earnestness, and can cordially recommend his book to readers of all ages, more especially very young men. There are several characters in the book well drawn and likely to impress themselves upon the reader's memory; more particularly *Honest John* and *Lady Grace Courtly*. Some of the scenes described are sufficiently ludicrous, as for example 'Practical Joking' and *Frank's* unwilling interruption of an amorous *tête-à-tête*. The account of the Commercial Travellers' Dinner might have been written by *Boz*. The author promises in the event of his life being spared to give a continuation of his story. We trust that he may be enabled to complete his design, and that renewed vigour will allow him, with pleasure to his readers and profit to himself, to impart more of his experiences of THE WAY OF THE WORLD."

From the "HAMPSHIRE TELEGRAPH," 5th July, 1862.

"'NUMBER ONE; OR, THE WAY OF THE WORLD' (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co.) is a creditable novel written by Mr. Frank Foster, an author who is not without some reputation in the literary world. It may be said to partake somewhat of the character of an autobiography, incidents in the author's own life forming the groundwork of the literary superstructure, and the work is written for a decidedly moral and practical purpose. We may therefore refer our readers to the work itself for their judgment."

From the "GUERNSEY COMET," 23rd April, 1862.

"This is a most interesting and instructive work—a record of the history of one who looks back from the meridian of life, and calmly scrutinizes the road through which he has travelled. Commencing at a period when, suddenly deprived of the watchful experience of a father and the tender love of a mother, he is launched upon the stream, to suffer or profit, as he makes or mars his future; we follow him as he plays the initiatory parts of the great drama of life, blest with that rarest of earthly treasures, a friend—one singularly qualified by keen observation of the outer world, and, better still, by an intimate acquaintance with the tendencies, the weaknesses, the failings of our nature, to counsel when the youth *would* stray, and blest with a heart large enough to pity and love and assist him when indiscretion had as a necessary consequence entailed a state of suffering. A sterling character is Honest John, drawn by the hand and heart of affection when the subject of the portraiture has removed where praise and censure have no longer power to elate or wound. The commercial world, typified by Fountain, Pillar, and Branch, is described with a vividness and fidelity only possible to one who, commencing at the lowest rung of the ladder and gradually winning his way upward, has familiarised himself with the details of a system marked by probity and rectitude, and which has contributed to raise so many of Britain's sons to the dignity of merchant princes of the earth. But our author has given us the counterpart in Reckless, Venture, and Bounce, and conscientiously exposed the delusions by which so many, in their ruinous eagerness to acquire wealth, sacrifice the sterling to the tinsel, the real to the imaginary, and only awake to their folly when advantages undervalued and opportunities neglected have for ever passed away. Frank Foster appears on the scene in a new character—that of an author,

and is more favourably received than many of the candidates for literary fame, although passing occasionally through the gradations which intervene between hope deferred and the exultation arising from a successful reception by the public. Two voyages to Australia are now undertaken, each of them terminating differently, and one of them introducing us, in Lady Courtly, to one of Nature's aristocracy, refined by culture, and the amenities of English social and domestic life,—a loveable lady, who knows how to pass the barrier which separates the high bred from the lowly born, and manifest the dignity and sweetness of the Christian character, without detracting from the self-respect which forms so important a feature in the womanly life of England. But we pass on to the concluding part of 'Number One; or, the Way of the World,' in which the author, in the school of suffering, has discovered the grand secret that happiness is not indigenous to our earth, but a celestial visitant, only waiting for an invitation to leave her native skies, and enshrine herself within the human breast. He gives to the world the old fashioned experience that it was 'good for him to have been afflicted.' Happy in the acquisition of another friend—a pious clergyman—taken, alas! too soon away, he adds his tribute to departed worth; and, concluding with self-examination, 'ascribes to the fallibility of his own heart every evil, whether in thought, word, or act, which has befallen him; but all the good which has been vouchsafed to him through life, to the protecting providence and guiding hand of God.'

"This volume, based upon fact, we commend to the public, young and old. Its delineations of character are bold and masterly. Its aim is to inculcate the necessity of being self-reliant, and to point out the advantages of steadiness of character. The truthfulness of the author's observations evidence maturity of judgment, and thorough acquaintanceship with the subjects of which he is treating; and we feel convinced that no man, with the least pretensions to mind, can rise from the perusal of the pages of the 'Way of the World' without the consciousness that he is under an obligation to a gentleman whose familiarity therewith has enabled him to describe them so faithfully."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR OF "NUMBER ONE." *

From the REV. JOHN HOWLETT, M.A., Reader at the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, and Rector of Foston, Leicestershire.

"I consider your interesting volume likely to be so useful to young persons, that I have this morning directed a copy of it to be added to the Library of our Proprietary School, and I shall recommend the Work whenever an opportunity occurs."

From the REV. HENRY KILLICK, M.A., Rector of St. Clement's Danes, Strand.

"Feeling as I do, that your valuable Work embraces an important subject skilfully treated, I wish it all the success it so richly deserves."

From the REV. RICHARD BURGESS, B.D., Preb. of St. Paul's, and Rector of Upper Chelsea.

"It is a great matter to get this kind of literature which, while it recreates and amuses the mind of a young person, is free from those objections that mar the purity of much of our literary fiction. With amusement you have succeeded in combining instruction in '*The Way of the World*.'"

From the REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., Poultry Chapel.

"I have read the book with great interest, and shall feel it a duty no less than a pleasure to recommend it to young men with whom I may come into contact."

* The reason for giving these extracts may be found in the first chapter of the present volume.

From the REV. THOMAS BURNET, D.D., F.R.S., Rector of St. James's, Garlick Hithe, London.

"I have read with much attention and interest your clever and excellent volume, entitled 'Number One.' I here use the epithet 'excellent' in reference to the sensible and moral drift of your design. I perused with pleasing interest your photographic allusion to my old acquaintance and much esteemed friend the late Rev. David Laing."

From the REV. HUGH HUGHES, D.D., Rector of St. John's, Clerkenwell, and Lecturer at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch.

"It strikes me as a very original work, and that it is a great merit in these days of plagiarisms and dilutions."

From the REV. WILLIAM COOKE, D.D.

"It is elegant and forcible in style, excellent in sentiment, and admirably adapted for usefulness."

From the REV. A. S. HERRING, B.A., Curate of St. Luke's, King's Cross.

"The tendency of the book is most praiseworthy, and the characters and scenes depicted are so clear that those who read them cannot but feel amused, warned, or corrected by the various incidents therein related:—Lady Grace—the poor but neat family of hop-pickers—Honest John—false friends, and other personages, and real but strange scenes, have left upon my mind traces which, I trust, will not speedily be eradicated."

From the REV. W. MEYNELL WHITTEMORE, Rector of St. James'-within-Aldgate, Editor of the "Sunday Treasury," &c., &c.

"I have been exceedingly interested in the contents of the book, and hope you may be encouraged to bring out the sequel."

From the REV. JOHN GRAHAM.

"I think it likely to do much good to the class for whom it is specially designed."

From the REV. LEWIN TUGWELL, Incumbent of
St. Andrew's, Lambeth.

"The volume appears to be useful for young people in general. It is, I think, the history of many young men in London."

From the REV. JAMES SUTHERLAND, Incumbent of St.
Philip's, Islington.

"Your truly interesting and valuable work will, I am sure, be very widely useful to young men. I shall introduce it into St. Philip's Lending Library."

From the REV. THOMAS COBB, M.A., Head Master of Sir
J. Williamson's Free School, Rochester.

"I am much pleased with the book. I consider it an admirable volume to put into the hands of those first starting in life, not only because it points out some of the difficulties they must expect to meet with in their career, but because of the truly Christian spirit which pervades the work."

From the REV. J. C. HARRISON.

"I cannot conceive anything more likely to do good."

From the REV. T. P. HOLDICH, M.A., Incumbent of St.
James's, Notting Hill.

"I have taken the opportunity of recommending to several friends your very interesting and useful book. I wish there were many 'Honest Johns.' I am afraid the character is a rare one."

From the REV. A. W. CHATFIELD, M.A., Rural Dean and
Vicar of Much March, Herefordshire.

"I have read your admirable work with great interest and pleasure, and heartily recommend it to my friends and acquaintance."

From the REV. JOHN COLE, M.A., Rector of St. Pancras,
Exeter.

"It is both an interesting work and one calculated to do much good."

From the REV. ALGERNON COOTE, Incumbent of Newington, Kent.

"I think the sound and cautious tone and the friendly Christian testimony of the volume, will be interesting and profitable to all."

From the REV. JOHN CHAPMAN, B.D., Vicar of Newport, Essex.

"I quite approve of the object of the book, and think it very likely to be useful to young people."

From the REV. W. J. COPLESTON, M.A., Rector of Cromhall, Gloucestershire.

"Not only is the object of the work good, but the execution also; and the interest very much enhances from the narratives being founded upon fact."

From the REV. H. S. CHAMPNEYS, Rector of Epperstone, Notts.

"I have read your book with much interest and some profit."

From the REV. W. CASSIDE, Vicar of Grindon, Durham.

"It appears to me a most ably written and valuable work, and I think it is likely to be attended with much benefit."

From the REV. MARMADUKE COCKIN, M.A., Vicar of Dunton Bassett.

"It is a very interesting and useful book."

From the REV. EDWARD SPOONER, M.A., Vicar of Heston.

"I have read your new book with great pleasure; it has interested me much."

From the REV. C. F. CHAMPNEYS, Vicar of Wendover.

"I do not doubt that your book is a true exponent of the 'way of the world,' and I think much advantage will result from its circulation, if the profit of its entire reading be in

proportion to the pleasure its partial acquaintance has afforded us."

From the REV. A. CODD, B.A., Vicar of Beaminster.

"I have derived great pleasure from its perusal."

From the REV. C. W. COLTON, Vicar of Baston, Lincolnshire.

"I shall certainly recommend its perusal, especially amongst a certain class whom I consider will derive much moral and practical good from a work so succinct and well pointed."

From the REV. THOMAS CHARLEWOOD, Vicar, Kinoulton.

"I have read it with much interest, and entirely approve its object and beneficial tendency."

From the REV. R. CHAMPERNOWNE, B.A., Rector of
Darlington.

"The lessons are applicable, and likely to be useful to men in every sphere of life."

From the REV. C. J. COLLIER, B.C.L., Incumbent of
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From the REV. R. H. CHICHESTER, Vicar of Chittlehampton,
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"I have read it with much pleasure, and believe it cannot fail of being highly useful, especially to youths entering on life."

From the REV. EDGAR SHERLOCK, M.A., Curate of
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From the REV. WILLIAM COCKETT, M.A., Perpetual
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“It is a production which does great credit both to the heart and head.”

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“From its perusal I have derived both information and entertainment. I hope you will (D.V.) be able to continue the work.”

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From the REV. T. W. CARR, Rector of Loddington.

“I trust it may meet with the success it deserves.”

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“It is well calculated to be very useful, not only to the young but also to many of their seniors, if they would only carefully ponder it.”

From the REV. RICHARD CHAPMAN, M.A., Rector of Normanton.

“It is calculated to make a deep impression upon the youthful mind. I trust your life may be spared to complete the sequel.”

From the REV. T. R. BROWNE, Vicar of Southwick.

"My friends are delighted with its contents. I wish you success in its circulation, which must be attended with benefit."

From the REV. CHARLES BURY, Vicar of Tickhill, Yorkshire.

"I have risen from the perusal with pleasure, and with the conviction that the book is a faithful, graphic and, I think, profitable illustration of that prediction of the apostle—which, in my opinion, is receiving a fuller accomplishment in this than any preceding age—'Men shall be lovers of their own selves.' To sensitive minds this is painfully evident, yet it is a marked and humiliating characteristic of society in the present day."

From the REV. THOMAS CLARKE, B.A., Rector of Ormside.

"It is just the sort of book one would like to see placed in the hands of young men. Although we live in a book-making and reading age, there are comparatively but few books of a light nature at all calculated to benefit young men in their every day business life. In the young man's library, however, 'Number One' may take its stand as a prominent volume, from which every reader may obtain many useful hints, and derive most important and valuable information."

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"The Work has my unqualified approval, and I sincerely hope it may do all the good its talented author wishes it to effect."

From the REV. J. P. CAREY, M.A., Rector of Rothersthorpe.

"I consider it a book from which great benefit is to be derived both by young and old. For village libraries I think it a most desirable work."

From the REV. W. BOYLE COGHLAN, M.A., Marrington Hall, Salop.

"Your book has confirmed my previously formed opinion—of the value of trusting chiefly to one's own exertions, and not to place much faith in promises of the great and influential in '*the way of the world*,' whose fair words end in nothing but promises to 'do what they can for you.'"

From the REV. G. J. CORSER, M.A., Curate of Norton, and Head Master of Daventry Grammar School.

"I have been much interested in the work ; it is calculated to impress the minds of young people concerning life, especially those who, like the Author, have their own way to make in the world ; nor can the Christian spirit in which it is written, in its unobtrusive sincerity, fail to touch the deeper feelings of its readers. When I next distribute prizes, I will see that some copies of Mr. Foster's book are among the list."

From the REV. W. HAY CHAPMAN, Incumbent of High Cross, Standon.

"I am indeed thankful of the testimony you give of the sufficiency of true religion—the blessed realization of the love of God in Christ Jesus."

From the REV. H. CURTIS CHERRY, M.A., Rector of Burghfield, and Chaplain to the Right Hon. Lord De Saumarez.

"Your work has afforded me the greatest treat ; indeed I never perused a book with so much interest, and, may add, with more profit to myself. To every young person it cannot fail to be a most suitable gift."

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"I have read 'Number One' with much pleasure. It is, I think, very likely to be useful, and I trust you may be able to supply another volume, and be an instrument of much good. Your interesting narrative may find its way where a sermon would gain no entrance."

From the REV. ROBERT HENRY CHARTERS, M.A., Head Master of the Grammar School, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire.

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"Allow me to say that I read it with great interest and satisfaction,—not merely because of its capital illustration of the Number One tendency which everywhere prevails, but for its admirable adaptedness to teach young men the important lessons of self-dependence and steady perseverance."

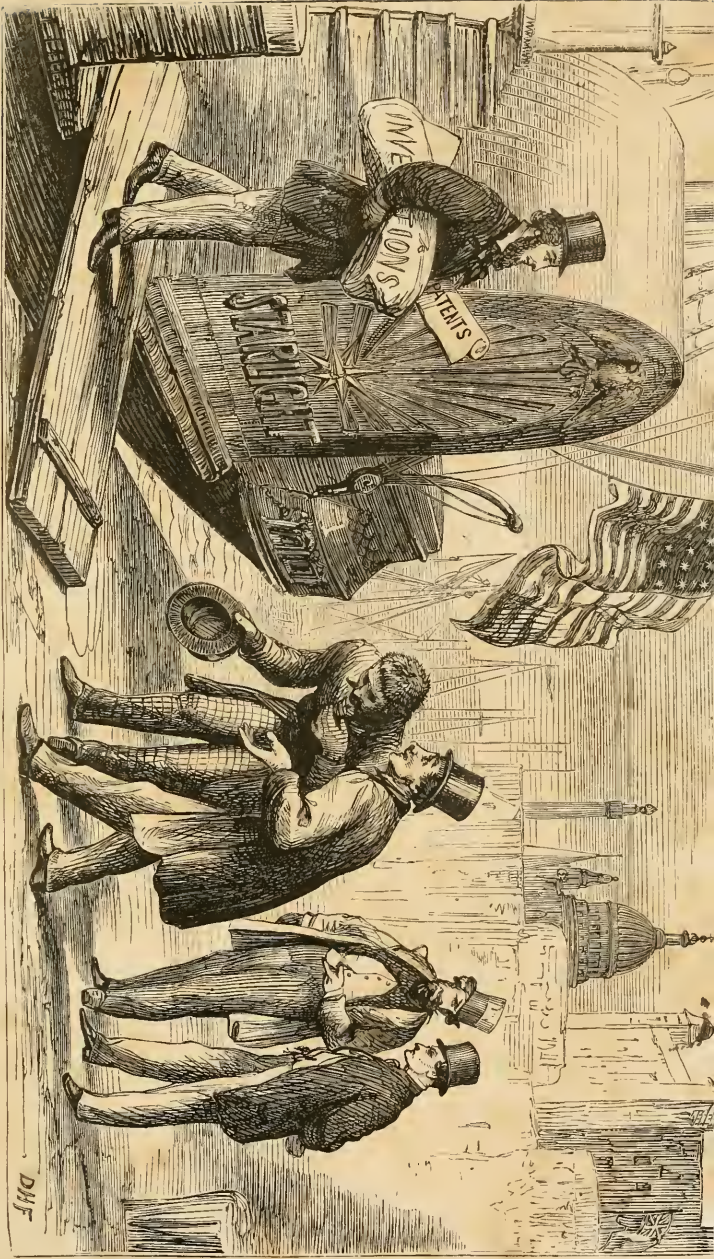
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"I regard it as well suited to accomplish your end. I wish you much blessing, as the result of your hard won experience, and much success in your literary venture."

* Mr. GARRATT is the author of a work—"The Midnight Cry"—of a very superior character to any that ever proceeded from the pen of the "poor, simple-hearted Frank Foster." Frank Foster is therefore bold enough to recommend the "Midnight Cry" to Mr. —, of the *Athenæum*, not for review—as the work is no doubt *out of his line*—but for attentive perusal and calm reflection.

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Letters addressed to the author of "NUMBER
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for their insertion will be found in the first
chapter of the present volume.

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